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ABSTRACT

These conference papers favor the pluralistic approach to cultural education. The approach emphasizes development of a sense of one's own and others' cultural heritage while uniting society by reducing cultural antagonism. The document presents five major speeches followed by respondents' comments in order to include a wide range of viewpoints on the subject. "Americans: Hyphenated or Not" contends that the school system is vital to the development of a sense of cultural pluralism and that a cross-cultural, multi-ethnic approach is best. The author encourages statewide implementation of ethnic studies through advisory committees, policy statements, teacher training, and multicultural education centers. "Ethnicity and Educational Policy Making" discusses the ethnic challenge to educational systems, the salient ethnic concerns that affect policy making, the characteristics and goals of ethnically reformed systems, and the status of the Minnesota State Board of Education's commitment to pluralism. "The Schools and Group Identity" provides an overview of the shortcomings of the melting pot theory and contends that examination of ethnic group consciousness can help humanize the curriculum and close the gap of intergroup misunderstanding. The respondent considers problems relevant to special education. "Public Policy: Ethnicity and Institutional Change" examines the relationship of these three concepts in the context of the quota system. "Images of Pluralism in Children's Literature" describes fiction about the Upper Midwest in which American Indians and Scandinavians figure most prominently. In a concluding speech, the New York City Board of Education President describes facets of ethnic education in New York City schools. (KC)

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Minnesota Conference on Ethnic America. The Commitment to Pluralism: Fact or Fantasy. Proceedings.

SO 011 269

MINNESOTA CONFERENCE ON ETHNIC AMERICA

The Commitment to Pluralism: Fact or Fantasy

PROCEEDINGS

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Section B
Ethnicity and Educational Policy Making: Some Ethnic Concerns
Section C
The Schools and Group Identity: Educating for a New Pluralism?
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SO 011 269

Wednesday, April 12, 1978

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PREFACE

This publication is a result of the Minnesota Conference on Ethnic America. The papers included were presented at the Conference held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on April 12, 1978, through a grant from the Minnesota Humanities Commission. The Conference was jointly sponsored by the Minnesota Project on Ethnic America and the Jewish Community Relations Council—Anti-Defamation League with the cooperation of the International Institute of Minnesota, University of Minnesota Immigration History Research Center, Upper Midwest Ethnic Studies Association as well as several individual ethnic and other community organizations.

The request for papers to the individual presenters included the general topic title but allowed for great latitude in the approach to be taken by the author. Respondents were also encouraged to explore the entire topic and to enlarge upon complementary facets of the topic under consideration rather than a confrontative response to the primary text. Presenters and respondents were selected so as to include a broad range of viewpoints. The only restriction placed upon authors and respondents was that all papers had to take up the general theme of ethnicity and its impact on various aspects of American life.

Presentors and respondents are responsible for the views presented in their papers. No attempt has been made to edit or redirect either central or subsidiary themes as expressed by the authors.

The directors of this project along with the organization that sponsored this Conference would appreciate receiving reactions to the papers and the ideas that are presented.

Since this preface to these papers is being written at such a late date it can be reported that the Minnesota Project on Ethnic America has established several sub-committees to further discuss the issues raised at the April Conference. Concrete position statements are being developed in several areas which may be addressed to appropriate local, state and federal agencies as well as private institutions which have responsibility for establishing policy or custom in the areas of the topics under consideration.

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AMERICANS: HYPHENATED OR NOT?

by

Dr. Gordon O. Hendrickson

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Gordon O. Hendrickson

I have been asked to address my remarks this afternoon to the topic: "Americans: Hyphenated or not?" That topic certainly is open-ended. On the one hand it can flippantly be answered with a simple yes or no response. On the other hand, a single volume would not be sufficient to probe all of the manifestations of the topic. I shall use my allotted time to present a few of my thoughts about ethnicity and ethnic groups in America, the value of a pluralistic society, and the role of America's schools in promoting an appreciation for a pluralistic society.

When attempting to determine the validity of using a hyphen in a term such as Italian American, one must first reach an understanding of the meaning of the term. If the term is meant to describe a unique segment of American society—that is, a unit which combines in equal shares the characteristics of Italian and American cultures, a hyphen should be used. By this definition, one would be equally at home and accepted in either Italy or America. On the other hand, if the term Italian American is used to describe an American whose historic, cultural and social roots originate in Italy, then the hyphen should not be used.

What exactly do we mean by the terms "Italian American", "German American", and the like? To my mind, these terms describe segments of American society whose historic roots are linked to another part of the world. Thus, I use the terms without hyphens. One cannot assert that an equality of experience exists between Italian Americans and Italians. An Italian American in Italy is viewed not as an Italian, but as an American. In most cases, this is as true for the foreign born as it is for American born ethnics. This identificational pattern for Americans who return to the area in which their heritage is based, indicates that they are something different from the citizens of their native land. A most telling example of the difference between ethnics in the United States and people in their original homelands is their language. Linguistic development of the ethnic groups in America is distinct from linguistic development in the countries of origin. We have all heard stories, I am sure, of Americans who returned to their countries of European origin and used certain phrases or language patterns and constructions which no longer are a part of the language of that country. My parents, for example, used expressions when in Norway recently which had not been used there for fifty years. Ethnic groups in America are not the same as the groups in the European countries of origin. A Norwegian American is not the same as a Norwegian in Trondheim.

By the same token, a Norwegian American is not the same as an Italian American or a Polish America. The real question we need to face is: "How ethnic are ethnic Americans?" Or, from another angle, "How American are ethnic Americans?" These questions are, I think, at the core of what we are talking about this afternoon. The answers obviously are different for each individual, but perhaps some general answers can be reached in this regard. Milton Gordon has studied the place of ethnic groups in the broader perspective of social structures and has concluded that varying levels of identification are present within all people. When queried as to one's self-identification, one is likely first to relate to himself, his immediate family, his ethnic group, his religion, his race, and then to his country. Thus, according to Gordon, individuals are likely to work from themselves outward to the broadest level of identification which they feel.[1] When evaluating whether American ethnic groups are more ethnic or more American, one must determine the outermost level of identification which members of the groups claim. If a study of ethnic Americans were conducted with regard to this question, I think the results would show the outermost level of identification for the vast majority of American ethnics to be America rather than some other country in the world. This conclusion, of course, is subjective and I welcome any information regarding this matter. Identification with an ethnic group usually is at a secondary or tertiary level for a sizeable percentage of Americans.

Even though the outermost identification for the vast majority of American ethnics likely is to the United States, does this mean there is a society or culture which is American? In and of itself, it does not, but other factors indicate that there is an American culture and society. Indeed, there is a broad ethnic group in the United States which might be called "American". A review of self-identification figures for residents of the United States shows that some ninety million do not claim identification with an ethnic group. They consider themselves to be Americans.[2] Indeed, if as I suggest, ethnic Americans are for the most part Americans who recognize and respect their non-American heritages, there must be cultural factors which tie the ethnic individual, regardless of background, to the remainder of the country.

We can look to the metaphors which have been used over the years to illustrate the immigrants' contributions to American society and see that in all cases there is something more than just the pieces which are thrown into the melting pot, the salad bowl, or the mosaic frame. The melting pot, of course, connotes the development of an American society which is the sum total of all the ingredients thrown into the vat. The salad bowl suggests that the pieces which are in the bowl retain their individual forms. Yet, if we carry the metaphor a step further, it is the salad dressing which provides the unique flavor to the entire dish. The dressing changes the taste of the lettuce, carrots and tomatoes. One can say, then, that the metaphorical salad is more than just the ingredients thrown into a bowl and tossed. The extra ingredient is the American factor. Likewise in the mosaic, all of the tiles would be loose and disjointed without the grout which holds them in place. The grout, like the salad dressing, contributes to the beauty of the final picture. It is the American factor.

We need to consider, for a few minutes, the question of what ethnic identification means. For individuals who claim an identification with an ethnic group, the identification adds to their personal understanding of who they are, what they stand for, and why they are the way they are. In a country where all members of the society originated elsewhere and have emerged from cultures and heritages which do not coincide with the culture in which they live, an understanding of past development fulfills a basic need for understanding one's self. It inspires a feeling of pride and personal worth.

For the country as a whole, the matter of ethnic identification can lead to good or to evil. It can lead to the development of many diverse, separate and factious groups within the nation. In this respect, ethnic identification and the promotion of ethnic groups can be a divisive force in the nation. On the other hand, it can be a unifying force for the country. By promoting an understanding and appreciation of ethnic differences and the contributions of diverse ethnic groups, the country can be drawn together. The differences which are frequently cited as separating groups can serve to draw the nation together. It is possible to be American and something else. Indeed, such is the case for some ninety-five million white and an additional thirty-five million nonwhite ethnics in the United States today.[3] The unique factors which provide historic identification for these groups need to be understood and appreciated. They should not be forced to abandon their heritages; their cultures should not be denigrated. By the same token, the ninety million Americans who do not associate with an ethnic group should not be forced to identify with such a group; they should not feel either more or less important than those who do identify with ethnic groups. Cultural pluralism respects and appreciates the diversity within the American system. If feelings of ethnic pride can be developed and an appreciation for diverse ethnic cultures can be cultivated, then the new ethnicity can be a unifying force for American society. Acceptance of persons who are from different backgrounds, different cultures, and different races, is an essential part of developing a united country. Cultural pluralism strives to this objective.

Cultural pluralism needs to be promoted in all sectors of the American society. Individuals within the ethnic groups must be given the opportunity to understand their own heritages and they need to understand the heritages of members of other ethnic groups as well. Vital to the development of an understanding and appreciation of pluralism and ethnicity is the school system. Without an active, vital ethnic studies program in America's classrooms, young people will continue to view American history and life through false perspectives. Since the schools cannot present separate courses on each ethnic group in America, a multiethnic approach must be utilized.

Through this means students can learn of the histories and cultures of many groups. They can learn of the problems and concerns which ethnic Americans, regardless of their backgrounds, faced and continue to face. To learn, for example, that prejudice and discrimination are a part of Polish American history, Italian American history, and German American history, as well as Black American history, can help students to understand and to deal with these serious problems.

Students must be given an appreciation of their own ethnic heritages, knowledge of the contributions which members of their own ethnic groups have made to the nation, and an awareness of the role of other ethnic groups in the nation's history. Individual students may lose or reject their ethnic identity without positive educational programs. Worse than simple loss of ethnic identity, is the loss of the opportunity to understand the cultural heritage from which they have come. Students must be given the chance to identify with their cultural heritages, if they so desire. The schools have an obligation to provide the students with sufficient information so their decisions are based on knowledge, not ignorance.

Members of all ethnic groups need to understand their own unique cultural heritages, but they also need to recognize and appreciate the similarities of experiences which faced all groups in the United States. The differences between groups should be, in the words of the Minnesota Board of Education policy statement on equal educational opportunity, "recognized, appreciated and accepted, not eliminated".[4] (Emphasis in the original.) At the same time, the similarities of experience for these groups must also be recognized and appreciated.

In the fact of the diverse cultural heritages of the many ethnic groups present in the United States, state boards of education must undertake to insure a proper atmosphere of appreciation and concern for the many cultural factors present in the nation. While specific courses cannot be offered in each school dealing with each of the ethnic groups individually, action can be taken to insure the incorporation of multiethnic approaches in existing curricula. A cross-cultural multiethnic approach to ethnic studies permits the development of the student's ability to understand himself as well as his fellow students regardless of their racial or ethnic background. Through this means, many of the cultural antagonisms which exist between ethnic and racial groups can be reduced. In the words of John A. Carpenter:

> "On the one hand, it (a cross-cultural multiethnic approach) leads students to expect the unity or oneness of man as demonstrated by universal needs and universal forces influencing human behavior. On the other hand, students come to know and accept without threat the differentiated cultural experiences of these needs. In the words of Gordon Allport, cultural groups will 'see each other as variants of a common humanity.'"[5]

The concept of ethnicity permeates the entire scope of American society. It is not something which can be discussed simply in one course. It must be viewed from all sides.

Schools which have worked to incorporate ethnic studies into their curricula have done so too often from a monoethnic approach or by establishing separate and distinct ethnic studies courses. By so doing, they have presented an image for their students of ethnic studies only relating to a particular group. They have also created an illusion that ethnic studies is something which can be isolated in certain realms of personal action. When ethnic studies are presented only in special ethnic studies courses, students receive an impression that ethnicity is an isolated concept which affects only special or different people. Such, of course, is not the case. In order to overcome this interpretation, multiethnic studies in the schools should be a part of a wide range of courses, not just the traditional social studies courses or special ethnic studies units.[6] Ethnic diversity can, for example, be illustrated in physical education, music, home economics, sociology, history and political science courses. Teachers in all disciplines need to be encouraged to present the multiethnic dimensions of their individual courses.

Recognizing the multiethnic heritage of the United States and the role which ethnic groups have played in our historical development, the United States Congress adopted the Ethnic Heritage Studies Act in 1972. Congress, through that act, endorsed the concept of ethnic pluralism and recognized the need for ethnic studies programs in the American school systems.

In addition to recognizing the multiethnic character of the American people, Congress endorsed a program of federally funded projects which were designed to incorporate multiethnic studies into American classrooms. By the end of fiscal year 1977, 134 projects throughout the United States had been funded under Title IX of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—the Ethnic Heritage Studies Program.[7] These projects have developed curriculum materials, made them available for classroom use, and trained teachers in their implementation. Incidentally, this program is in serious danger of not being renewed by the Carter administration. If it is not renewed, the financial burden for multiethnic curriculum materials will fall more heavily upon the states and the local school districts.

Federal endorsement of the concept of ethnic pluralism as well as governmental financial support for ethnic studies programs has stimulated much activity among the states. States such as Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, Hawaii, Pennsylvania, California and Nebraska, among others, have, through legislative mandate or state board of education policy statements, required the development of multiethnic approaches in education. These states have taken different routes and offered differing degrees of support for the incorporation of ethnic studies in the school systems. Some states have mentioned specific groups which must be discussed in ethnic studies programs; some have urged the incorporation of all groups in all disciplines; still others have created statewide agencies specifically designed to promote ethnic studies research and to develop curriculum materials for multiethnic education. All totaled, thirty-three states had issued statements concerning multiethnic education by 1973. Twenty-six state boards of education had directed their state departments of education to incorporate multiethnic studies into the states' educational programs, and thirteen state legislatures had mandated the incorporation of multiethnic studies in the school systems.[8]

These state regulations correspond closely to the established opinions of leading educational organizations. Groups such as the National Council for the Social Studies and the Association of Colleges for Teacher Education have endorsed the incorporation of ethnic studies into the classrooms. They have favored a multiethnic cross-cultural approach to these studies. The National Council for the Social Studies, in preparing its curriculum guidelines for multiethnic education posited several basic principles concerning multiethnic studies. Among these was the following:

> "Educators in each subject area in the school have a responsibility for incorporating studies related to American ethnic groups into their units and lessons. Teachers of areas such as music, art, language arts, mathematics, science, home economics, and physical education, as well as the social studies share this responsibility."[9]

The NCSS thus stressed the use of materials concerning *all* ethnic groups in *all* classroom disciplines. In 1972, the Association of Colleges for Teacher Education rejected the view that schools should "melt away cultural differences".

Rather, it proposed that schools actively support culturally pluralistic education.

> "To accept cultural pluralism is to recognize that no group lives in a vacuum—that each group exists as a part of an interrelated whole.... Schools and colleges must assure that their total educational process and educational content reflect a commitment to cultural pluralism."[10]

Even though many states have taken steps, which coincide with the suggestions of these educational organizations, toward incorporation of multiethnic studies in their classrooms, not all have. Even in some states which have existing policy statements and legislative mandates, the policies are not being enforced. We need, therefore, to encourage implementation of effective multiethnic education programs in all states of the Union. In states where programs do not exist, we need to secure proper statewide endorsement for the efforts and in states where legislatures or state boards of education have already acted, we need to see that the proposals are actually implemented.

In order to assure the development of effective multiethnic studies programs in America's schools, state boards of education should undertake the following steps.

A. Appoint advisory committees to offer advise and suggestions concerning the development of multiethnic studies programs.

B. Draft and adopt policy statements concerning the role of multiethnic studies in the classroom, if they do not already exist. These statements should direct the state departments of education to lead the way in multiethnic education through curriculum development, teaching training, providing guidelines for educational materials development and review, directing school administrators to incorporate multiethnic studies in the school districts, and by developing legislative proposals concerning multiethnic education.

C. Direct the state departments of education to undertake active, meaningful programs of teacher training for the promotion of multiethnic approachs to education among currently active teachers.

D. Adopt appropriate means of assuring that once regulations are prepared, they are carried to actuality in the schools.

E. Establish multiethnic education centers in the states which will serve as the coordinating bodies for the development and dissemination of multiethnic educational materials.

If effective statewide programs, incorporating the features above, are developed throughout the United States, significant progress will result in the battle for true acceptance of ethnic diversity in the nation. If these steps are taken, the commitment to pluralism will indeed be closer to fact than fantasy.

As we know, America is a land of great diversity. With some 130 million Americans who identify with ethnic groups, efforts must be made to understand the many cultures and heritages present in the nation. This is the objective of multiethnic studies programs in the schools. Acceptance of cultural pluralism and its incorporation into the schools and to everyday American life will serve not only to increase our understanding of ourselves, but also to reduce many of the ethnic tensions which exist in the country. If, as we eat from the great American salad bowl, we do not sample all of the ingredients, we cannot fully appreciate the entire dish. Likewise, if, as we sample that salad, we omit the dressing, we will also fail to capture the true flavor of the mixture.

Footnotes

1. Milton Gordon, Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 23-30.

2. Harold R. Isaacs, "The One and the Many: What are the Social and Political Implications of the New Ethnic Revival?" American Educator (Spring, 1978), p. 7.

3. Ibid.

4. State of Minnesota, Board of Education, "Policy Statement on Educational Leadership Role for Department of Education and Board of Education in Providing Equal Educational Opportunity," November 9, 1970.

5. Quoted in Judith Herman, (ed.), The Schools and Group Identity: Educating for a New Pluralism (New York: Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity, 1974), p. 10.

6. Ibid., p. 34.

7. Ethnic Studies at the Federal Level (Detroit: Michigan Ethnic Heritage Studies Center, 1977), pp. 37-64.

8. Nancy Seifer, "Education and the New Pluralism: A Preliminary Survey of Recent Progress in the 50 States" (Paper presented to 1973 Annual Meeting of the National Coordinating Assembly on Ethnic Studies, Detroit, Michigan, May 19, 1973), pp. 3-4.

9. Curriculum Guidelines for Multiethnic Education: Position Statement (Arlington, Virginia: National Council for the Social Studies, 1976), p. 6.

10. Quoted in Herman, Schools and Group Identity, p. 27.

AMERICANS: HYPHENATED OR NOT?

by

Dr. Lee Smith

Dr. Smith is a Teacher at the St. Louis Park Public Schools and co-Director of the World Religion Curriculum Center.

Lee H. Smith

Dr. Hendrickson's paper is a contribution with fresh insights and broad implications for ethnic studies in our nation's schools. The salad bowl paradigm is a useful and refreshing way to consider the pluralistic nature of American society and culture. The emphasis on salad dressing is perhaps the key, and with that in mind it is not so important whether we use a hyphen or not, whether it is Italian American or American Italian, but rather that we use the most flavor enhancing salad dressing. A dressing that does not obscure the individual vegetables but, rather, one that preserves the integrity of the salad components.

The schools are probably among the major blenders and selectors of the salad dressing, and it is only as a school person that I am able to respond to Dr. Hendrickson's ideas. Our problems of suspicion, bigotry, discrimination and prejudice are, in part, the product of an educational system which has been unbelievably successful at times. With some exceptions of course, the great goal of American schools has been to provide the immigrant child (all of us) with English literacy and some of the skills for participation in the American economic and political processes. Because of the high value placed on these goals little or no attention has been paid to cultural origins, if they were not, in fact, even depreciated in the process. The teaching of "foreign" languages in our schools is a case in point. The emphasis has focused more on learning to read the language and its use for research purposes, rather than on learning a form of human communication and a dynamic aspect of another culture. It seems the blend of the salad dressing (the curriculum and behavior of the school) must be such that the long range goal should result in the words pluralism, ethnicity, and American become virtually synonomous.

We have been and continue to be, after all, a nation of immigrants, including the Native Americans. Each of us with our own roots, each with our peculiar immigration experiences is, in a certain sense, an ethnic, with the WASPS probably being the largest ethnic group. The fact of this common experience is seldom acknowledged.

Schools must also learn and teach that cultures are dynamic entities. Dr. Hendrickson's illustration regarding the language differences between ethnics in the United States and the people in their original homeland, suggests that we do not have a very dynamic view of cultural systems and how they operate. We need to learn and appreciate the fact that the immigrants and their descendants participate in something different from their cousins in their common homeland. This fact has broad implications for a global dimension in education as well as multi-cultural. We seem unaware of the diverse qualities in other cultures as well as our own. Diversity may be normal, healthy, and global.

Any serious attempt at multi-cultural education must move with an awareness that individuals develop and understand their circles of identity in different ways. For some, and subtleties.

Now, who bears responsibility for the many ingredients which flow into the salad dressing? The many agencies and individuals from the federal and state level down to classroom teachers. Policy statements, goals, and programs which set direction are important and needed. They alone are not enough. Every classroom teacher at every grade level, in every subject matter area, may not provide the answer, either. For what is defined as everyone's work often becomes no one's work as teachers mutually abdicate responsibility in favor of the teacher across the hall. There is also a risk of fragmenting efforts so that Chinese becomes "chow mein," and Irish is "St. Patricks Day" instead of seeing these identities of origin as viable, rich, cultural entities.

For the present observer the greatest hope lies not only in official policy and broad awareness but, specifically, in the availability of authentic multi-ethnic instructional materials which are useable for the teacher and interesting for the student. These must be developed with a view of "who am I?", "who are you?", and "how did we become who we are?". Perhaps that is the dressing which, properly used, makes the lettuce and tomatoes so complementary.

religious affiliation or denominationalism may provide the identity functions often associated with an ethnic group for others. For some, this has been a natural progression of events because religion and ethnicity have frequently been interlaced. Religious groups in the United States often cannot be understood apart from their immigration experiences; the Blacks, German Lutheran, the Free Churches, Ukrainian Catholics and Orthodox, and Polish Catholics provide only a few illustrations. American religious groups in the past, and to some extent today, have been organized on ethnic criteria; the Eastern Orthodox jurisdictions, the "National Parishes," and the various "rites" within the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran synods, and the Reformed Churches of the Dutch provide a few examples. As the process of Americanization takes place various shifts and patterns of change emerge; from the exclusive use of the native language in services and instruction to bilingualism, and eventually to English. In time even the official name changes, such as the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church recently becoming the Orthodox Church in America. Above all else religious groups, ethnic groups, and religio-ethnic groups function as reference groups for people within and outside the group. Individual and group identities are focused and sharpened, not only by the group of membership, but also by other groups which can be called into reference. The point of all this is that pluralism is complex, and educators need to understand its many dimensions

ETHNICITY AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY MAKING: SOME ETHNIC CONCERNS

by

Ms. Ruth Meyers

Ms. Meyers is a member of the State Board of Education.

Ruth Meyers

I would like to begin by most cordially thanking the planning committee for the Minnesota Conference on Ethnic America and the coalition of conference sponsors for the opportunity to meet with this assemblage to exchange ideas, and to participate in the needed resolution of our overriding question-theme: "The Commitment to Pluralism: Fact or Fantasy?" The more explicit focus of this sectional meeting pursuant to that theme is: "Ethnicity and Educational Policy Making: Some Ethnic Concerns".

One of my hopes for this meeting is that we should agree on, indeed insist that, there should be an integral and unalterable linkage between ethnicity and educational policy making. Additionally, it is my hope that our discussions, our recommendations, and resolutions pursuant to that topic stimulate new insights, renewed commitments, and viable directions for the ultimate attainment of pluralistic education. To that end, I intend in this presentation a cursory exploration of the ethnic challenge for educational systems, the characteristics and goals of ehtnically reformed systems, and finally, an examination of some ethnic concerns salient to policy formation.

As an active minority member and representative of the Minnesota State Board of Education, and as an unwavering proponent of equal educational opportunity for all members of the public sector, I am continually mindful of the need for educational reform and the concomitant need for educational leadership to take an affirmative stance in encouraging and directing the current shift from the mono-cultural or Anglo-conformity educational model of the past. According to Milton Gordon—author of Assimilation in American Life—the Anglo-conformity model has as a central assumption the desirability of promoting and maintaining the customs, language, and mores of Anglo-Saxon cultures. This model has taken its major impress from the mold of the overwhelmingly English character of the dominant Anglo-Saxon tradition—now sub-culture in America. The model epitomizes a societal direction toward conformity in personhood in contrast to a pluralistic model of diversity. Significantly, American educational systems assumed a primary role in acculturating its students to the conformity goal. That goal held much in common with another popular turn-of-the-century theory of the "melting pot" which proposed that people from all over the world would come to the United States, meet new people and new races, intermix and come up with a new breed called "the American". Though prejudice, discrimination, racism, and ethnocentrism were the intervening barriers, the melting pot myth profoundly influenced American education in consort with the Anglo-conformity model. Together the two phenomenon meant discarding the ethnic in favor of the American.[1]

Clearly, such models are obsolete and inherently ethnocentric. The Anglo-conformity or Anglo-centric model which still exists to varying degrees in many of this nation's schools, has harmful consequences for both Anglo-American children and ethnic minority children such as, Native Americans, Afro-Americans, Jews, and Asian-Americans. By teaching the Anglo-American child only about her/his own culture, the school is denying the child the richness of the music, literature, values, folk-styles, and perspectives of diverse ethnic groups. Similarly, the Anglo-centric model negatively affects the ethnic child of color because he/she may find the school culture alien, hostile, and self-defeating. Because of the negative ways in which ethnic minority students and their cultures are often viewed by educators, many of these students do not attain skills which they need to function successfully in either an academic or non-academic community.[2] Suffice it to say, if Anglo-conformity remains as the primary vehicle of American education, then large numbers of our citizenry will remain alienated from mainstream experiences. Contrastingly, a pluralistic schema within academe will potentially increase the kind of diversity needed for wider participation by minorities; as well as the general enrichment of life experience for both minority and majority group members.

Perhaps a quick poll of those present here would indicate a general awareness of the ethnic challenge to educational systems. As you may well know, that challenge insistently, and justifiably demands that American educational systems resonate to pluralistic and multiethnic needs within the total process. The roots of that challenge are inherent in the political movements of the 1960's and 1970's which stimulated a general recognition of needed reform in educational institutions at all levels, from kindergarten through university. The earliest and most vigorous demand for ethnic studies programs came from Afro-Americans during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's. The rallying slogan: "We shall overcome!" alerted the nation to the consequence of Anglo-centrism, racism, separatism, and ethnocentrism undeniably characteristic of all its institutions. The bent was to "overcome" the Anglo-centric siege upon ethnic personhood. The challenge to reform was clear. The challenge to reform specific to education was in the demand for the integration of black studies, black perspectives, and black contributions within the total arena of the educational experience.

> "Other alienated ethnic minorities followed the pattern set by Black Americans and made similar demands for ethnic heritage programs which reflected their cultures, aspirations, and political goals. They also expressed ways in which they were oppressed by the larger society and insisted that their plight in society was not adequately taught in the schools. Chicano spokespersons called for a reinterpretation of the 'winning of the West' and argued that the United States gained the Southwest ruthlessly by prodding Mexico into war in 1846 to seize her northwest territory. Consequently, they asserted, the Mexican-Americans were a colonized people within their native land. American Indian leaders argued that they were the first and therefore native Americans."[3]

American Indians—my people—justifiably challenged for the removal of monoethnic blinders from the traditional American educational perspective toward history and experience. This would, in effect, reveal that in the interest of "civilization", "progress" and "education", the culture of American Indians has been mocked, stereotyped, suppressed, and nearly destroyed. Native people maintained that American history should be taught from an Indian perspective. During that same time period

> "Puerto Rican leaders stressed their colonial status and explained how Puerto Rico remained a colony when it came under American tutelage after the Spanish American War ended in 1898. Asian American groups, such as Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans and Filipino Americans voiced similar discontent with the way in which American history and culture was taught in the schools. Some Japanese-American activists expressed outrage because they were dubbed the 'model minority', and noted how the 'success myth' was used to minimize and obscure the serious psychological problems and[4] discrimination experienced by Japanese-Americans."

The common denominator characteristic of these, and certainly other groups alienated from the mainstream, was the expression of outrage against white racism and discrimination with the debilitating affect of political powerlessness for its victims. The hue and cry was a demand for ethnic heritage programs which would enhance their group's self-perceptions and contribute to their economic, political, and psychological liberation.

The demand for educational pluralism and ethnic studies programs spread widely. "White ethnic groups, such as Polish Americans, Italian Americans, and Irish Americans, demanded ethnic studies programs that would focus on their particular ethnic groups." Unfortunately, and perhaps inevitably, "in some communities white ethnic groups and non-white minorities aggressively competed for limited resources allocated for ethnic studies programs."[5] The resolution specific to this ironic dilemma appears not to be in the quick prioritization and reaction to those most vocal and militantly posed needs, but it is more pointedly a resolution of policy—educational policy which must affirmatively promote a multi-pluralistic focus within the total system. Moreover, the ethnic challenge is clear, that all students—red, black, yellow, white, and brown—in American public schools have an inherent right to develop a minimal if not maximal level of ethnic literacy and to understand the role of ethnicity within an increasingly pluralistic society. That society or "new pluralism", as defined by Irving Levine in his 1973 address to The New Jersey Consultation on Ethnic Factors in Education, is one which

> "accepts individual and group uniqueness, which allows for balance between identification with a small group and commitment to the society as a whole, and in which individuals who do not wish to identify with any group are also fully accepted."[6]

Within the last decade, sporadic and hastened attempts at pluralistic reform resulted in some setbacks—some of which still negatively affect many school programs. According to recent studies conducted by Dr. James Banks—professor of education at the University of Washington and a noted authority in the area of race and ethnicity in education—

> "many school districts, more anxious to silence 'militant' ethnic students and teachers than to reform the curriculum, structured hurriedly and pooly conceptualized ethnic studies programs and hired anyone with a visible claim to ethnic group membership to teach them. Consequently, these programs were often badly taught and highly politicized. They often emphasized how ethnic peoples of color had been victimized by institutional racism. Moreover, the courses usually focused on only one ethnic group. Thus black studies units and courses were usually taught in predominantly black schools, Puerto Rican studies courses were usually taught in predominantly Puerto Rican American schools,"

and so went the emphases of other ethnic programs. Dr. Banks further maintains that during the initial phases of system reform the prevailing assumption was that only Black Americans needed to study black history, literature, folklore, and black-oriented socio-political dynamics; and that only Puerto Rican Americans needed to study about Puerto Ricans, and so forth. He suggests that while both the politicized nature and monoethnic character of ethnic studies programs have waned considerably in recent years, monoethnic programs and practices still haunt the multiethnic educational movement.

> "School districts often point to their Asian studies, Native American studies, and/or Black studies courses to explain why they have not attempted to reform the general course of study. Since these courses are usually electives taken by only a small percentage of the school population, district personnel tend to think that there is not a great need for them."[7]

Unfortunately, the elective and auxiliary classification placed upon multiethnic emphasis tends to communicate to the student that ethnic foci are merely incidental rather than integral to knowledge development. Furthermore, I suggest that the commitment to pluralism is, indeed, suspect if not fantasy rather than fact for those systems which tenaciously hold to monoethnic models. The ramifications of this parochial view are far ranging and fall far short of the basic characteristics, goals, and strategies of multiethnic educational goals.

Fundamentally, multiethnic education involves the study of both "us" and "them", not just the study of ethnic people of color or ethnic minority groups. Moreover, it "assumes that ethnicity is a salient part of American life and culture."

It assumes, according to one source, that ethnic diversity enriches the pluralistic hue of the nation by increasing the way in which its citizens can perceive and solve personal, intragroup, and intergroup problems. This diversity additionally provides its citizens opportunity to experience other cultures and thus to become more fully functioning and fulfilled human beings. When individuals are able to participate in a variety of ethnic cultures they are more able to benefit from the total human experience. Clearly, individuals who know only their own ethnic perspectives are denied important parts of that total experience and are, in effect, culturally and ethnically encapsulated.[8]

Ethnicity in education additionally means that

> "the ethnic and racial composition of the school staff, its attitudes, the formalized and hidden curriculum, the teaching strategies and materials, the testing and counseling program, and the school's norms are some of the elements which must reflect ethnic diversity within the multiethnic school."[9]

These are the variables prerequisite to ethnically reformed systems.

System reformation committed to the tenets of the "new pluralism" is structured by the implementation of the following goals:

1. to help individuals gain greater self-understanding by viewing themselves from the perspectives of other cultures;

2. to provide students with cultural and ethnic alternatives within the general curriculum;

3. to provide all students with the skills, attitudes, and knowledge they need to function within their ethnic culture, the mainstream culture, and within and across cultural group parameters;

4. to reduce the pain of discrimination which members of some ethnic and racial groups experience because of their unique racial, physical, and/or cultural characteristics; and

5. to help students to master essential reading, writing, and computational skills fundamental to survival within an increasingly complex and changing society.[10]

Suffice it to say, the actualization of these goals up and down the educational hierarchy is fully dependent upon a commitment to pluralism within the policy making dominion. These goals which are reflective of multiethnically reformed systems are yet a more specific delineation of the 1971 Congressional "Ethnic Heritage Studies Act" which in Section 901 states that:

> "This title is enacted in recognition of the heterogeneous composition of the nation and of the fact that in a multi-ethnic society a greater understanding of the contributions of one's own heritage and those of one's fellow citizens can contribute to a more harmonious, patriotic, and committed populace. It is further enacted in recognition of the principle of all students in the elementary and secondary schools of the Nation should have an opportunity to learn about the differing and unique contributions to the national heritage made by each ethnic group. Therefore, it is the purpose of this title to assist schools and school systems in affording each of their students an opportunity to learn about the nature of his own cultural heritage and to study the contributions to the Nation made by other cultural heritages."

Though the Act is in no way comprehensive nor definitive of ethnicity in American education, it does, in fact, resonate to certain pivotal concerns of ethnic groups relevant to present and all subsequently developed educational policies: concerns regarding heterogeneity versus a forced molding of individual and group personhood into an arbitrarily promulgated homogeneous norm; understanding versus confounding ignorance, prejudice, and blind fear of the unknown; harmony versus intergroup disonance, tension and conflict; opportunity versus limitation and deprivation; uniqueness versus an alienation of difference; and finally an ethnic concern for a truly representative cultural heritage program in the schools tempered by a pluralistic inclusion of the contributions "of one's own heritage and those of one's fellow citizens" in contrast to a monocultural bent. I suggest that these are the ethnic concerns that fundamentally link policy and practice. These are the concerns that must affect educational policy formation.

Thus far within the context of this presentation I have discussed three pivotal issues: the ethnic challenge to educational systems, some characteristics and goals of ethnically reformed systems, and a few of the more salient ethnic concerns that affect educational policy formation. Before concluding, however, it seems appropriate that I make some mention of the status of the State Board's commitment to pluralism and educational policy. I feel that I can best illustrate that commitment by quoting to you certain excerpts from our most recent "Policy Statement on Educational Leadership...":

> "The Minnesota State Board of Education and the Minnesota Department of Education are committed to the constitutional mandate of providing equal educational opportunities to all students in the public schools of Minnesota. Inequities in educational opportunity are multi-dimensional and to overcome them the resources of local, state and federal agencies must be developed and coordinated. Racial prejudice, sex role stereotyping, and class separation, basic causes of educational in-

> equities, are no less pronounced in our school systems than elsewhere in our society. No challenge is more urgent to the leadership role of the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education than the necessity of assuring the fullest possible education for all students, regardless of their race, culture, sex or socio-economic level...
>
> Public education must be philosophically committed to the respect for a pluralistic, non-racist, non-sexist society, as a significant value in our American way of life...
>
> Our society will not survive unless it can adapt to change. Nor can any element in our society hope to survive alone. Therefore it is imperative that state and local education agencies recognize and accept their responsibility as potent change agents. Schools must create an atmosphere for learning which is devoid of all prejudice, sex role stereotyping, discrimination and separatism. Knowledge of the complex causes and consequences of prejudice, sex role stereotyping and discrimination must supplant existing myths and misconceptions.
>
> Since racial prejudice, cultural prejudice and sex role stereotyping are determined and perpetuated by complex interactions of social and psychological factors, eliminating prejudice and stereotyping requires a variety of interrelated approaches in education. The purpose of any program to prepare students to live in a pluralistic society is to dissolve the barriers which prevent contacts and understanding between members of various groups.
>
> With the mobility of students, it is particularly pertinent at this time that the schools prepare students to live and function in a pluralistic society free of race and sex bias. To this end, the State Board of Education urges school districts to initiate new programs and to reconstruct established curriculum whenever necessary to meet these educational needs."

And to that policy statement, with its attendant guidelines and regulations, Howard B. Casmey—our Minnesota State Commissioner of Education—adds:

> "The Board's focus in the provision of opportunities for all students regardless of race, sex or social class to learn to live in a pluralistic society through inter-

> cultural and non-sex biased education... I join with the State Board of Education in urging local school boards and administrators to take the initiative now to implement the provisions of these regulations, guidelines and policies."

Though we have come a long way, we have yet a long way to go in terms of implementing that policy to the satisfaction of all groups. In consequence, I maintain—or rather insist—that the responsibility and leadership for direction and change is now incumbent upon local policy makers. Moreover, it is incumbent upon us—the members of this assemblage—to influence the formation of that policy to insure its resonance to the ethnic distinctiveness of all our children. Nevertheless, as a board member and concerned minority, I am personally proud of the significant strides we've already taken within our own ethnically diverse state parameters. And, I am more confirmed in the belief that within our state system we are, indeed, committed in fact to the hallmark of a pluralistic bent.

Footnotes

1. Harry H.L. Kitano. Race Relations. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., pp. 56-63. (1974)

2. James A. Banks. Multiethnic Education: Practices and Promises. Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation. p. 7. (1977)

3. James A. Banks. "Teaching Ethnic Studies: Key Issues and Concepts," The Social Studies. pp. 107-108. (1975)

4. Ibid.

5. James A. Banks. Multiethnic Education: Practices and Promises. Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation. pp. 13-14. (1977)

6. Nancy Seifer. The New Jersey Consultation on Ethnic Factors in Education: Program Summary and Recommendations.... Newark, N.J.: Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity. p. 4. (1973)

7. James A. Banks. p. 108. (1975)

8. James A. Banks. p. 6. (1977)

9. Ibid. p. 20.

10. Ibid. p. 16.

ETHNICITY AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY MAKING:
SOME ETHNIC CONCERNS

by

Mr. William D. Dean

Mr. Dean is the Minnesota State Representative from District 58A.

William D. Dean

Let me begin by thanking the planning committee for offering me the opportunity to be a panelist and reactor at this important conference. Indeed, it is not often enough that legislators and policy makers are able to sit down with researchers and practitioners outside the hectic atmosphere of a legislative session to learn from each other. It is something that should be done more frequently than it is. Not only would better policy making result, but all of us would arrive at a more realistic understanding of the practical and political problems that arise in the development of ideas into policy and laws.

I am a member of the Minnesota House of Representative's Appropriations Committee and a member of the Education Division which is a sub-unit, a subcommittee, if you will, of the full Appropriations Committee. While we are not usually considered to be a "policy making" committee in terms of directing Minnesota's educational policy per se, members of our Division have a de facto policy making role because we pass on the dollars allocated to all state supported educational programs including aids to local school districts, funding for the State Department of Education, funding for the Council on Quality Education, funding for all of the state supported institutions of higher education and the Higher Education Coordinating Board. In addition, any program which has a fiscal impact must, by rule, pass through our committee. Thus, I am familiar with most of the present law in Minnesota as it relates to ethnic education by virtue of having dealt with its funding and fiscal implications.

My presentation today will focus mainly on some of the practical and political considerations inherent in the policy questions raised by Ms. Meyers' paper. But before I get into that, I do wish to comment briefly on several of the theoretical arguments presented in her paper.

First, let me say that I agree that students regardless of ethnic or cultural heritage benefit from the widest possible exposure to divergent cultures. However, I think we must all remember that the primary purpose of education is to provide children with the skills necessary to function in society. In our case, it is a society which is predominantly English-speaking and Anglo-Saxon or Western European in culture, modified, of course, by the input derived from a multitude of other cultures.

Consequently, any educational process which does not prepare our children to operate in such a society will be dysfunctional and harmful both to our children and society.

While I agree with the author's statement that American education has traditionally been dominated by the Anglo-Saxon culture, I do not believe that the emphasis on conformity is necessarily peculiar to just that culture. Any educational process, regardless of the cultures it promotes, emphasizes conformity. In learning basic language skills, for example, we must all conform to the notion that a given word or words has a meaning which is understood in much the same way by all. Conformity is particularly important if we consider ours to be a pluralistic society, as it serves to provide the bond of commonality between the various ethnic groups.

Meyers also places a good deal of emphasis on the importance of pluralism in education. Although our educational system has tended to be ethnocentric, there is no guarantee that a more pluralistic educational system would discourage or eliminate the dominance of one particular culture. After all, a pluralistic society is one comprised of several cultures or ethnic groups. That does not mean, however, that those cultures or ethnic groups must be equal in size or political power. Again, one must remember that in our society the "other cultures" - for example, the Hispanic, Black, Indian, and Oriental - are minorities by themselves. Consequently, in emphasizing the teaching of other cultures, one cannot ignore the largest - the "Anglo" culture.

Ms. Meyers states that the melting pot, Anglo-Saxon model of education is obsolete and inherently ethnocentric. Perhaps the model is somewhat ethnocentric, but I am not sure it is clear this model is totally obsolete. I believe we can reform this model without having to dismiss it out of hand.

But Ms. Meyers is obviously calling for reform of the educational system. Let me, then, turn to some of the practical and political considerations which must be assessed in attempting to implement reform. Assuming reform is warranted, and I believe it is, legislators must keep in mind that "multi-ethnicity" is only one of a number of worthwhile goals for reform. During the legislative process, policy makers are bombarded with the arguments of those who would advocate other goals for reform. For example, we hear pleas for competency-based educational promotion, for more "alternatives", for the open school, for the reduction of sex-role stereotyping, and many, many other less publicized "reforms".

Some practical questions come to mind. For example, in constructing a program for ethnic education, at what point should the teaching of divergent cultures be introduced? Do we start with grade one, five, or ten? How much of a particular culture or subculture do we teach about? For instance, do we teach about the Black Africa culture, do we teach the West or East Black Africa culture as it existed in the 16th century, or as it exists in the 20th century? Do we teach the culture of Black American slavery of the early 19th century or the rural southern Black culture of the 20th century? Or do we deal with Black northern urban culture of the 70's? Similarly, do we emphasize the cultural differences in old Europe between the Slavs, Germans, Italians, Scandinavians, the Irish, the English, the Spanish, etc.? Or do we focus on the differences between the present day European cultures - which tend to be much more alike than they were two or three centuries ago?

These are all serious, practical questions which I believe educational planners must face if we decide, as a state, to move ahead affirmatively in the directions proposed by Ms. Meyer.

Actually, Minnesota's policy commitment to ethnic education has been piecemeal and relatively recent. Two laws currently on the books, and one which has been recently repealed provide the only statutory background against which a policy for multi-ethnic education might be clarified.

In 1977 the legislature passed Chapter 306, the Bilingual Education Act. This Act established no less than three pilot programs in bilingual education at the district level. It was designed as a voluntary program to provide instruction in the student's native language so that he could learn English and the other basic skills more readily. The act also provides that instruction be given in the student's cultural heritage. It prohibits isolation of the student who participates in the program from the general student body. It creates a teacher preparation program, and it maximizes parental and community involvement through the Program Advisory Committees and a State Advisory Task Force. Finally, it directs the State Board to conduct a needs assessment; to evaluate the programs; and to report back to the legislature by September 1 of 1979.

Also passed during the 1977 session was Chapter 312, the American Indian Language and Cultural Education Act. Here again the act establishes six pilot programs on a voluntary basis and includes similar provisions requiring community input, a needs assessment, program evaluation and a report to the legislature.

A third law was repealed in 1977. That was the Human

Relations Training Act, a program that grew out of the civil rights problems of the late 60's and which required teachers and administrators to have had instruction in human relations specifically as it relates to minorities.

In light of these practical considerations and current state law, it would be surprising to me if the legislature does very much more with this issue or develops a more comprehensive proposal until the results of the pilot programs established by Chapter 306 and 312 are reported to the legislature in 1979. That means it will probably be 1980 or 1981 before the legislature will deal with multi-ethnic education in any depth.

Let me move on now to what I consider the most important contribution I can make to this discussion and focus on the political problems involved in instituting a real commitment along the lines suggested by Ms. Meyer.

While the heterogeneity of American society may be very apparent in some areas of our country, in many parts of Minnesota it is not. Minnesota contains over a hundred legislative districts which by themselves may be among the most homogeneous in the nation. As we all know, Minnesota is made up of people mostly of Germanic and Scandinavian heritage. Most out-state legislative districts and their representation in the legislature reflect those ethnic factions.

Minnesota House members represent districts of roughly

30,000 people each. I know that there are districts in southern and western Minnesota, for example, in which a majority or at least a substantial minority of the population has rarely even seen a Black or a Native American, let alone dealt with minorities on a day-to-day basis. In cases like those, it is very difficult for the people or their representatives to understand the need for a more "pluralistic" education. That is not to say that there is not a need for it. Perhaps it is in areas such as I described that the need is greatest. My point is that the need is not perceived and thus there will predictably be a great deal of resistance to another "mandated" program coming down from St. Paul. In fact, in my judgment, the resistance to state mandated programs has grown in recent times to the extent that it is now a major issue of and by itself, particularly among the smaller outstate school districts.

Another roadblock to the implementation of such programs would likely be erected by the financial constraints we are experiencing now. With school populations declining at the same time as we are facing rapid inflation, most districts are experiencing severe financial hardships. Unless a large number of additional dollars are provided by the state to assist districts in implementing such new programs, there simply will not be enough money available to implement any reform.

Also, I perceive a general public interest and, in fact, determination to return to the basics. This, of course, relates to the skills often known as the 3 R's. If that determination is to be satisfied, there obviously is going to be less time in the school day to spend teaching other cultures. Parents seem to be saying, we want schools to teach our children to read and write. They are talking about reading and writing the English language, which implies, perhaps, a renewed emphasis on some aspects of the "Anglo" culture. Thus, I think it is going to be extremely difficult, given the present atmosphere, to expect school districts to provide more time in the curriculum for something which is perceived by many to be unneeded or less important than the "basics".

Consequently, it is my belief that the best way for supporters of multi-ethnicity to promote their goals - certainly the most advantageous way - would be through increased local participation at the district level. Local proponents should try to "educate" their friends and the local board as to the importance of multi-ethnicity in education and to seek changes in the district's educational foci. In so doing, the reform thus would be viewed as grass roots reform.

Ultimately, however, I think legislators and policy makers must continue to ask the questions, "What should be the goals of schools? What goals can the schools practically hope to achieve? and What educational goals will be achieved by other institutions, for example - the church, community groups, ethnically-oriented groups, and the family and extended family itself?" In trying to answer these questions, I hope we will recognize the importance of focusing on the cultural heritage of each of our society's ethnic groups as well as that of the "Anglo culture".

ETHNICITY AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY MAKING:
SOME ETHNIC CONCERNS

by

Dr. Gordon O. Hendrickson

Dr. Hendrickson is Research Associate of the Immigration History Research Center of the University of Minnesota.

Gordon O. Hendrickson

In being asked to comment on Ruth Meyers' paper concerning the relationship of ethnicity and educational policy making, I am not quite sure how to begin. The format of her paper is clear and the material presented is, I believe, valid. My comments, therefore, will be in the nature of a general statement about the relation of ethnicity and educational policy which will supplement and expand on Ms. Meyers' presentation. I will include some specific suggestions on what can, and I believe should be done, in Minnesota to further multiethnic studies.

Before developing the connection between ethnicity and education, I think we must define two basic terms: ethnic group and cultural pluralism. With these definitions in mind, we will be able to interpret better the relationship of these concepts to the educational process.

The term ethnic group refers specifically to a collective of people who are united by a common cultural heritage usually relating to a specific area of origin. Thus there is a geographic basis to an ethnic group which does not necessarily relate to any historic political boundaries. More importantly, there is a cultural factor to an ethnic group which incorporates such diverse things as language, religion, folk beliefs, music and art, and a sense of a shared heritage. Ethnic groups are not, therefore, equivalent to racial minorities even though there may be racial elements contributing to an ethnic group's heritage. Within the diverse racial groups many ethnic groups exist, each with a particular heritage and culture which is both similar to and different from other groups within that racial group and which is also both similar to and different from ethnic groups within other racial groups.

Cultural pluralism is a concept which refers to the manner in which diverse ethnic groups interrelate in a foreign environment. In the United States, where literally hundreds of diverse ethnic groups exist, recognition must be given the different heritages of these groups. Cultural pluralism, in the words of one educator,

> "is not an official political policy, rather it is a societal condition in which members of ethnic groups may choose to practice a great deal or a little of their ethnic heritage without fear of political or physical reprisal, in which differences in cultural values, beliefs, and behaviors are accepted, and in which different ethnic communities are allowed to exist side-by-side."[1]

Pluralism, thus, endorses the continued existence and recognition of ethnic differences but does so in an atmosphere which is free of prejudiced behavior and biased political thought.

The question which we face in this panel is the relationship of these concepts, ethnic groups and cultural pluralism to the goals and objectives of the school systems. Ruth Meyers has given us a good historical review of the movements of the 1950s and 1960s which led to the emphasis on ethnic studies in the school curricula. The movements which she described relating to the emergence of Black, Native American, and Chicano studies, were important stimuli in the movement toward truly multiethnic studies. As Ms. Meyers has stated, the emphasis in America's schools on the monoethnic approach to ethnic studies has created many problems. Hurriedly arranged and ill conceived, some of these programs have harmed the efforts for incorporation of the concept of cultural pluralism into the classroom.

This concern with monoethnic curricula makes clear the need for reform of the school structure so the basic tenets of the new pluralism are implemented. Ms Meyers spelled out those goals and objectives quite well. Simply stated, the goal is to promote an understanding and appreciation among the students of their own and other ethnic heritages. A cross-cultural multiethnic approach to ethnic studies permits the development of a student's ability to understand himself as well as his fellow students regardless of different racial or ethnic backgrounds. Through this means many of the cultural antagonisms which exist between ethnic groups can be reduced. In the words of John A. Carpenter,

> "on the one hand, it (a cross-cultural multiethnic approach) leads students to expect the unity or oneness of man as demonstrated by universal needs and universal forces influencing human behavior. On the other hand, students come to know and accept without threat the differentiated cultural experiences of these needs. In the words of Gordon Allport, cultural groups will 'see each other as variants of a common humanity.'"[2]

The efforts to incorporate multiethnic studies into state school systems has been enhanced by effective state leadership in a number of states. States such as Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, Hawaii, Pennsylvania, California, and Nebraska, among others, have through legislative mandate or state board of education policy statements, required the development of multiethnic approaches in education. The Illinois legislature, for example, stated that

> "...the teaching of history shall include a study of the role and contribution of American Negroes and other ethnic groups including but not restricted to Polish, Lithuanian, German, Hungarian, Irish, Bohemian, Russian, Albanian, Italian, Czechoslovakia, French, Scots, etc."[3]

Thus the Illinois Legislature included not only the traditional minority groups, especially Black Americans, but also less visible white ethnic groups as proper and necessary units for study. The Iowa State Board of Public Instruction required that

> "the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction, in cooperation with local educational agencies, should foster in all subject areas curriculum changes, implementation of teaching practices, and utilization of instructional materials which provide for all children a basis for understanding the contributions of racial and ethnic minority groups."[4]

Iowa's requirement promotes the growth of multiethnic study in all portions of a school curriculum. By law, students in Iowa will become aware of the ethnic contributions to the state and the nation. Pennsylvania, like Iowa and several other states, requires the incorporation of multiethnic studies into classrooms, but has taken an additional step to aid in the educational process. In 1974, the Pennsylvania legislature created a Pennsylvania Ethnic Heritage Studies Center designed to collect "information and research materials germane to the study of the ethnic heritage of the Commonwealth." In addition to promoting research, the Center was created to "develop curriculum materials for use in elementary and secondary schools which deal with ethnic groups of the Commonwealth and their contributions to the American heritage."[5]

State legislatures have, then, taken different routes and provided different degrees of support for the incorporation of ethnic studies in the school systems. Some states have mentioned specific groups which must be discussed in ethnic studies programs; some have urged the incorporation of all groups in all disciplines; others still have created statewide agencies to promote ethnic studies and to develop curriculum materials for multiethnic education.

Considering this state's history, and the role of ethnic groups in its economic, social, cultural, and political development, the concepts of multiethnic education must be adopted in the state's school system. The rich heritage of the State of Minnesota may be lost, or at very least severely distorted, without positive action on the part of educators throughout the state. Students must be given an appreciation for their ethnic heritages, the contributions which members of their ethnic groups have made to the state and the nation, and the role of their own group and other ethnic groups in the history of the state. Individual students may lose or reject their ethnic identity without active educational programs. Worse than simple loss of ethnic identity, is loss of the opportunity to understand the cultural heritage from which they have come. The leadership for active multiethnic studies based on the concept of cultural pluralism must come from the highest circles of the state government.

The Minnesota State Board of Education attacked the problem of Equal Educational Opportunity in 1970. A policy statement issued November 9, 1970, reaffirmed the Board of Education's and the Minnesota Department of Education's commitment to "the constitutional mandate of providing equal educational opportunities to _all_ students in the public schools in Minnesota".[6] (Emphasis added.) The policy statement then directed the State Department of Education to work in the areas of curriculum development, instructional materials, teacher training, school administrators and legislative proposals to achieve equal educational opportunity and improve human relations. The State Board of Education, in that policy statement expressed its belief that equal educational opportunity involved not just racial minorities but ethnic groups as well. In that document, the State Board endorsed the concept of pluralism in American society by stating that "differences, whether they be defined in terms of race, class, ethnicity, or personality, be recognized, appreciated and accepted, _not_ eliminated".[7]

The multiethnic tones of the November 9, 1970, policy statement were not carried forward to action. The Board of Education's "Guidelines Relating to Equality of Educational Opportunity and Desegregation, Intra-cultural and Inter-cultural Quality Education", issued on December 14, 1970, designed to implement the November 9, 1970, policy statement spoke of quality education for minority group students. The guidelines specifically defined minority group students as those "who are Black-American, American-Indian, Spanish surnamed American, or Oriental."[8] These guidelines, therefore, did not expressly include the "white" ethnic groups in the quest for cultural understanding. While the need exists for inclusion of these minority groups in the educational process, James Banks has discussed the concomitant need for ethnic studies relating to all groups for all students.

> "Ethnic content is needed by all students to help them to understand themselves and the social world in which they live. When studied from an interdisciplinary and comparative perspective, it can help students to broaden their understanding and conception of what it means to be human and enable them to better understand their own cultures and lifestyles."[9]

The consideration of equal educational opportunity applied only to Black Americans, American Indians, Oriental Americans and Spanish surnamed Americans does a disservice to members of each of these groups as well as to the large unstated group—white Americans. Within each of these racial groups many smaller, distinct ethnic groups exist. An indiscriminate lumping together of Oriental Americans does not recognize the considerable differences between Japanese Americans and Vietnamese Americans. Likewise the differences between Zuni Indians and Chippewa Indians are not apparent in a general category of American Indians. The same is true for white ethnic groups. There are considerable differences as well as many similarities of experiences between Norwegian Americans and Italian Americans. To lump any of the many ethnic groups together without recognizing the differences between the groups is a disservice to members of all ethnic groups. Likewise the creation of special categories based on racial heritage serves to divide the community rather than to unify it. Members of all ethnic groups need to understand their own unique heritages, but they also need to recognize and appreciate the similarities of experience which all groups in the United States have experienced. The differences between groups should be, in the words of the Board of Education policy statement on Equal Educational Opportunity, "recognized, appreciated and accepted, not eliminated". At the same time the similarities of experience for these groups must also be recognized and appreciated.

In order to assure the development of effective multiethnic studies in Minnesota classrooms, I suggest that the State Board of Education:

A. Appoint an advisory committee to the Board of Education to offer advice and suggestions concerning the development of multiethnic studies in Minnesota schools;

B. Draft and adopt a policy statement concerning the role of multiethnic studies in the classroom. This statement should direct the State Department of Education to lead the way in multiethnic education through curriculum development, teacher training, providing guidelines for educational materials development and review, directing school administrators to incorporate multiethnic studies in the school districts, and by developing legislative proposals concerning multiethnic education;

C. Direct the State Department of Education to undertake an active meaningful program of teacher training for the promotion of multiethnic approaches to education for currently active teachers;

D. Establish a multiethnic education center which will serve as the coordinating body within the State Department of Education for the development and dissemination of multiethnic education materials.

Footnotes

1. Anthony V. Codianni, "Reaction Paper to 'Ethnicity and the Schools'" (Unpublished paper presented at the National Council for Social Studies Conference, Cincinnati, Ohio, November 24, 1977), p. 6.

2. Judith Herman, (ed.), *The Schools and Group Identity: Educating for a New Pluralism* (New York: Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity, 1974), p. 10.

3. Ibid., p. 58.

4. *Multi-Cultural, Non-Sexist Curriculum Guidelines for Iowa Schools* (Des Moines: Department of Public Instruction, n.d.), p. 4.

5. P.L. 177, No. 175, Section 1316.1, Laws of Pennsylvania, Approved December 26, 1974.

6. State of Minnesota, Board of Education, "Policy Statement on Educational Leadership Role for Department of Education and Board of Education in Providing Equal Educational Opportunity," November 9, 1970.

7. Ibid.

8. State of Minnesota, Board of Education, "Guidelines Relating to Equality of Educational Opportunity and Desegregation, Intra-Cultural and Inter-Cultural Quality Education," December 14, 1970.

9. James Banks, "Teaching for Ethnic Literacy: A Comparative Approach," *Social Education* (December, 1973), p. 747, quoted in *Ethnic Cultural Center Report* (Minneapolis: Department of Intergroup Education, Minneapolis Public Schools, n.d.), p. 31.

THE SCHOOLS AND GROUP IDENTITY:
EDUCATING FOR A NEW PLURALISM?

by

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Christian K. Skjervold

THE SCHOOLS AND GROUP IDENTITY

The schools of the United States often appear to be schizophrenic in their objectives and means of dealing with the question of group identity in the educational process. This split personality is well exemplified in the lip-service we pay to the concept of individuality and the development of the individual when we speak of the youngsters within our school system. On the one hand we speak of the uniqueness of each child and on the other we voice our concern that the child have a proper sense of the totality of humanity. This feeling is perhaps best shown by a statement emanating from the 1970 White House Conference on Children which attempts to answer the question of what the 21st century man should be.

> "We would have him be a man with a strong sense of himself and his own humanness, with awareness of his thoughts and feelings, with the capacity to feel and express love and joy and to recognize tragedy and feel grief. We would have him be a man who, with a strong and realistic sense of his own worth, is able to relate openly with others, to cooperate effectively with them toward common ends, and to view mankind as one while respecting diversity and difference."

This short statement reflects very clearly the dualistic nature of the assignment which has been given to the school system—and particularly the public schools—of our nation. How do teachers and others deal with group identity within the framework of the educational process?

America is a nation of diverse social, economic and ethnic groups. It is a curious phenomenon that although we in the United States have a highly developed social science structure in education, we have devoted relatively little attention to the various groups—particularly ethnic groups—which flourish within our society. Only recently have the schools begun to accept the legitimacy of studies which more accurately portray the multiethnic character of America. Standard textual materials have tended to give the impression that America is a highly homogeneous society that has been forged through the common experiences of the Anglo-American heritage.

"From many, one"—peoples as well as states—has been the glory of the American Republic, and its torment. In the beginning, the New World offered its bounty to the curious, the lucky and the brave, whatever their social status or nationality—to all, that is, with certain exceptions including native peoples and the black slave.

We were pushed into the melting pot and told to form a new race of men. There was an early assumption that assimilation both mental and physical was unilinear. In this view the individual progressed through various stages of "Americanization" until they could emerge as the "new man". As soon as the language or customs of the old country were lost or replaced the individual had taken several steps down the road to being an American.

Of the many institutional fires which were ignited to bring the melting pot to the boil the schools were to have a critical role. The schools were a part of the broader context of public institutions and as such were charged with the major responsibility for the education of the child. Through this education there would be built a feeling of citizenship and a blending of the individual into the "American Dream". This assimilation into the American dream would ensure the child's integration into the larger society. While this became a function of the school it was something which at an earlier time or in another place would have been a duty of the parents or extended family. Perhaps this is only one more manifestation of in loco parentis, but by emphasizing citizenship, loyalty and a desire for sameness the education of the melting pot can be viewed as a political concept which at end would promote political consensus and define citizenship and thus, American.

Teachers and the schools were encouraged to disregard ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Indeed, the schools were urged to completely erase or ignore all signs of the child's background, and through a few short years were to mold the child into a useful citizen without regard to pre-existing conditions to do this, the schools most often found it efficient to strip the child of his or her ethnic birthright by asking them to choose between the language, customs and sometimes even the religion of his or her forebearers and the chance of making it in America. This choice was not placed before the child and the family as a clear cut decision but rather guised in the trappings of becoming a good citizen.

Many of the actions which led to the "Americanization" of the child were the end-product of a conscious plan on the part of school and other governmental officials. Others, however, were something that happened simply as part of the interaction between school and larger society. In the first category of conscious policy can be placed the many plans to destroy the tribal affiliations of America's native peoples through removal from their historic territories. The efforts to separate African peoples, in slavery, from those with whom they could communicate and thus forestall effective resistance to that "peculiar institution" were also part of a deliberate policy. In both of these instances people were physically and emotionally separated from the familiar and thus were made easier to control.

Unlike the laws which governed our official attitude towards Blacks and Indians we did not prescribe areas of settlement for the voluntary immigrant to America. While there were a number of laws governing all phases of immigration our national policy toward the immigrant in society seems to have been characterized by the growth of the unforeseen development. Nowhere was it mandated that one had to change religion or a name but many found it easier to do so then to resist the pressures of American society. The schools used English and while the native tongue was not forbidden outside its bounds the structure of society encouraged the abandonment of the immigrant language. Each of the changes, though seemingly small in themselves piled one upon the other to ensure the utility of the immigrant to American society through the melting pot.

While the concept of the "melting pot" helped to describe the need for political cohesion on the part of the American people it could not prescribe individual activity. While the schools called for a blending and the casting away of ethno-cultural baggage, family and peer loyalty served to reinforce ethnic tier. Indeed, ethnicity often powerfully buttressed the individual personality in a volatile, atomistic society which was dedicated, in principle, to the natural capabilities of the single citizen. Thus, our public educational ideology often grated against private notions of how affairs should be ordered. The traditions of family and group did not always reinforce the substance and style of our institutions. Even though individual citizenship and loyalty were results of education they were not enough to resolve the dilemmas of a nation of ethnics. We insisted on maintaining individuality for ourselves and a uniqueness for our group.

People today have come to realize that everyone is a member of a group, whether by choice or chance. They have begun to identify with differences distinguished by sex, age, occupation, interests, geography, physical and mental condition, to mention only a few. One of the most common groups with which people are identified is their ethnic group. And as has been pointed out, the schools have not responded in a positive manner to this identification.

The history of American public education has overwhelmingly demonstrated a lack of sensitivity to cultural and ethnic differences; a deficiency which has been commonplace throughout our society. Scholarship, often has tended to focus more on aspects of assimilation and absorption then on the diversity which is demonstrated through group identity. However, even though the schools were the heirs of either conscious or unbeknown assimilationism, the process was never as effective as its proponents would have desired. While much of the feelings of group identity or cohesiveness were subjugated through the daily confrontation with economic necessity—the need to learn English for the job, two world wars and nationwide depression—the very human group consciousness could not be entirely extinguished. Through admission of this essential human feeling the schools were faced with the problem of how to cope with diversity. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education has lately adopted a statement "No One Model American" which takes a position on the attempt to deal with diversity. The statement in part says:

> "Multicultural education rejects the view that schools should seek to melt away cultural differences or the view that schools should merely tolerate cultural pluralism. Instead, multicultural education affirms that schools should be oriented toward the cultural enrichment of all children and youth through programs rooted to the preservation and extension of cultural alternatives. Multicultural education recognizes cultural diversity as a fact of life in American society, and it affirms that this cultural diversity is a valuable resource that should be preserved and extended. It affirms that major education institutions should strive to preserve and enhance cultural pluralism."

However, there are serious obstacles to the acceptance of the above as a policy for American education. Pluralism and differences are oftentimes seen as barriers to national or even global unity. Some would categorize feelings of ethnicity as a pseudo species which prevents the development of an all encompassing human identity. The choice between a narrow allegiance only to one's own group and a broadly diffuse human identity is one which should not need be made. There must be a ground upon which one can stand that allows for a balance of identities. Every individual must be free to pursue his or her own course without ethnic background being a limiting factor. But a parallel right must exist in which each individual can be in his/her own ethnic group, without the pejorative connotation embodied in the words "parochial" or "narrow" being attached to that choice. The ideal would be that the uniqueness of each individual or group be allowed to enrich the experience of each other individual or group, that provincialism does not bind either to where they are. The schools are in a central position to implement this acceptance of intergroup understanding. The educational system should be an essential part of the recognition of individual and group identity.

One can not assume that the schools will provide the solution to group conflict merely by attempts to teach youngsters to understand or appreciate each other. While just as teachers have not developed lesson plans with the express objective of fostering mutual hatred or distrust because of ethnicity, it is not hard to conjecture that much prejudice and ethno-centrism has been allowed to take root because of a lack of positive efforts on the part of the educational process to break down the barriers to understanding. Certainly the schools are not the sum total of the educational experience of the youngster. Simple multiplication shows that the average high school graduate will have spent under 15,000 hours in all classroom experiences while a recent study reports that this same average graduate will have given approximately 18,000 hours to television. Time spent with television, family, friends and other groups most assuredly has an effect upon what we call the education process that produces the adult within our society. However, the schools are able to provide a time when youngsters may have their attention directed toward those human relations questions that they will need to consider in order to function in the larger context of American society.

Many objections have been raised to the inclusion of ethnic studies within the curriculum. These objections have ranged from the educational soundness of ethnic history to the possibility of fostering dissension within the classroom. Ethnicity is not of itself devisive, rather it can be a powerful force for unity. Some people believe that the more you talk about differences the more you tend to separate yourself from the whole. This is not the case as was pointed out in Toward Educational Renewal in the Seventies: A Report on Racism in Education for the Minneapolis Public Schools. The report explored the effect of a mono-cultural curriculum on the development and perpetuation of institutional racism:

> "Historically, in an ethno-centric society institutions of learning have perpetuated one set

> of norms, values and philosophies through the curriculum. All ethnic groups which aspired to be American were required to move in the direction of a white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant base. The melting of atypical cultures and the severing of ethnic ties were prerequisite to becoming Americans.... If diversity among white ethnics is suppressed, then obviously racial distinctiveness is enhanced. One's race becomes paramount at the expense of one's ethnicity. Accordingly, when the curriculum is designed and supportive of the "centrism", outsiders (non-white racial groups) would be lost,...."

As Robert Wood, the Director for the Joint Center for Urban Studies at MIT and Harvard University has stated,

> "It is urgent, then, that we face directly, honestly, vigorously the challenge in ethnic relations today. That challenge to our open society has never been greater, but the need to meet it has never been more imperative for the country and the world."

Ethnic relations and group identity have been seen as the direct opposite of education for the individual in which the expressed desire of our school system is to allow each child to reach the maximum of his or her ability. Looking at children as members of a group has somehow had a connotation of being perhaps even un-American. It is only recently that we have come to accept as legitimate the aspiration expressed by groups of people, handicapped or aged, and we still have far to go in reconciling ourselves to positive measures in employment or job security. It is not the purpose here to explore the issue of Affirmative Action but rather to emphasize the point that one is not an American only as an individual. This recognition helps to determine one of the functional dimensions of ethnicity and ethnic groups. American schools do not graduate thousands of homogeneous individuals into the mainstream. They and society must deal with a plurality of groups. Not only have ethnic groups not been assimilated, but ethnic identification has been seen as a useful focus for organization in defense of legitimate interests. This is particularly true when government seems to rely upon ethnic and racial criteria in the allocation of resources. Ethnicity, as a means of self-interest-defense, then, favors a more democratic and egalitarian society.

Ethnicity and ethnic groups mean many different things to many different people. Otto Fienstein through his experience with ethnic communities and curriculum has developed this definition of "ethnicity":

> "Ethnicity means peoplehood, a sense of commonality or community derived from networks of family relations which have over a number of generations been the carriers of common experience. Ethnicity, in short, means the culture of people and is thus critical for values, attitudes, perceptions, needs, mode of expression, behavior and identity."

To this description perhaps could be added Andrew Greeley's statement which includes people bound together by "real or imagined common origin" as oftentimes ethnic origin can not be precisely traced nor can one exclude persons from an ethnic identity because they have several ethnic backgrounds from which to choose. In short, then, ethnic identity is a process, not an achieved and ossified quality. Ones ethnicity is a commitment to a social grouping which exists within a larger society of diverse ancestral origins but which shares some values, behavioral patterns or symbols different from those of the larger society.

It can, perhaps be said that ethnic groups are people in whom the past endures, and in whom the present is inconceivable without moments gone by. Genuine understanding occurs only when the events of the present disclose the meaning of the past and offer an anticipation of the promise of the future. The question of relevancy in this kind of history has been raised oftentimes. To state that ethnic history in schools is not relevant, of course, is to negate the relevancy of our own action for tomorrow, today's existence will become history.

The schools have tended to remain conservative in their approach to learning, and to back off from the discussion of basic human issues. Changes in our social systems have not kept pace with the rapid economic and scientific advances of our times. Intergroup conflict flourishes not only in the United States but in many places throughout the world, and schools have tended to ignore these conflicts except as political or military events. In our own country it has been hoped that other institutions would defuse the issue before it had to be discussed in the schools. By seeming to upgrade the status of Blacks, Spanish-speaking peoples, Asians and some 60 million silent majority Americans, it is hoped America will depolarize a myriad of social issues.

Many different organizations and groups are attempting to rectify omission and commissions of the past. For example, the National Project on Ethnic America and our own Minnesota

Project on Ethnic America aim at assisting people in meeting the challenges of a multi-ethnic society. The Illinois school code now includes a section requiring state supported institutions to teach:

> "The role and contributions of the American Negroes and other ethnic groups including but not restricted to Polish, Lithuanian, German, Hungarian, Irish, Bohemian, Russian, Albanian, Italian, Czechoslovakian, French, Scotts, etc., in the history of this country and this state."

The examples of official and unofficial resolutions, laws and proclamations concerning the inclusion of the ethnic group experience into American studies at all levels of public school education are too numerous to develop fully at this particular time. However, the reality of inclusion falls far short of the ideal or even of the essential.

There are a number of benefits to the school system from an exploration of ethnic group identity within the curriculum. Through an honest and open examination of identity within the classroom the youngster will come to know that while some ethnic claims are exaggerated there is a reality in others. For example, ethnic politics. Within our own state of Minnesota there are Congressional Districts which apparently only a Swede or a Norwegian can represent in Congress. The same is true in many other Congressional Districts of New York, Connecticut, New Jersey and other states where various ethnic names seem to win time after time. Yet, in spite of this clear evidence, American history and politics are generally taught as if ethnicity did not exist. Through this ignoring of the real world children are denied the joy of experiencing discovery, discovery of their roots and the roots of others. At the same time the youngster is exploring the world of ethnicity we must give each child a sense of worth, of personal identity. There is no need to attempt to remove the child from a recognition of belonging to the great family of humanity. Quite the contrary, the conception should be that because the child is a human being he or she must be allowed to feel that he or she has emotional security within a larger group than that of his or her own immediate family. If the child is banned by prejudice from the acceptance of the majority, he or she will naturally turn to the next welcoming supportive group. That group, realistically, is the racial, religious or other ethnic peer association. Without the primary and properly proud feeling of group acceptance and consequent identity, the child can't readily have self-respect, and thus cannot offer genuine respect to those of different group backgrounds. Somehow, somewhere the child has to know and feel that racial and cultural differences do not in themselves imply personal inferiority on anyone's part, and that other children of other groups have needs and concerns which in our multi-ethnic society are as legitimate as his or her own.

The introduction and examination of ethnic group consciousness as a field of study or as a part of the disciplines which are traditional in the schools can help to humanize the curriculum. Far from attempting to negate the feelings of group identity of the child, the schools should seek to preserve and nurture those feelings. This will help to bridge the dichotomy between the instruction for individual self-actualization and instruction designed to promote human wholeness. No longer will the culturally or ethnically different child be considered "culturally deprived". An acceptance of group identity and cultural pluralism within our school system will enable us to close the gap of intergroup misunderstanding. This recognition is necessary for the future of our multi-cultural nation.

THE SCHOOLS AND GROUP IDENTITY:
EDUCATING FOR A NEW PLURALISM?

by

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Olga Zoltai

Mr. Skjervold made it very clear in his eloquent presentation that for almost two hundred years the meaning of "unum" in the inscription of the presidential seal of the United States of America, "E pluribus unum", has been interpreted as a word synonomous with "homogenous". That is, that the United States is a country of multi-national origin which produces homogeneous individuals. That interpretation was reflected in the policies of education, especially of public education. It was assumed to express public opinion and was tactfully supported and nourished by the endorsement and publicity of cognate slogans. Like the analogy of the melting pot, which takes an indiscriminate mixture of differently spiced ingredients and after a short period of boiling and curing a uniformly flavored and superior brew is produced.

Undoubtedly, some melting did occur in this great pot of nations. However, the product does not appear to be a smooth brew with a unique bouquet. In fact it is more like an Irish stew with chunks of beef and lamb and pork and Chinese grasshoppers, and here and there it has strong flavor of garlic and curry and chili and paprika. The fact that American individuals and local communities still have strong ethnic characters was well demonstrated by Mr. Skjervold's comment that in some sections of the country you have an unfair advantage over other political candidates if you have a German name, and somewhere else if your name is Scandinavian or Irish or Chinese. The ethnic character in some areas persisted through several generations and shows no signs of fading. In fact, some facets of ethnic consciousness are getting stronger. Especially, those facets which are related to family histories, languages and folk arts. The International Institute of Minnesota has been approached by an unusual number of requests to analyze the ethnic character of names, to translate letters into a variety of languages, letters which were designed to establish contacts with long forgotten relatives. Especially, since the spectacular television success of Roots. Our foreign language classes are full with people who wish to learn the language of their grandfathers. We are responding to requests in many topics of folklore, in Norwegian hardinger, in Ukrainian egg painting, in Hungarian stitchery, and in Polish paper cutting.

Folk dancing is a favorite sport of many people and is frequently associated with the acknowledgement of ethnic heritage or interests.

There was a long period of time when parents were ashamed of their background. That is changing now. Today's Japanese Americans don't need to prove their loyalty. People of German descent are not held responsible for Hitler's atrocities. School programs are reflecting a similar adjustment.

According to the conclusions of modern research in child psychology, the personality of an individual is almost fully developed before the age of 3 years. That is, long before he or she gets into public school. That also means, that if that child had any ethnic atmosphere in the parental house some hint of ethnicity will be with him for the rest of his life. That will be there whether the schools attempt to depress or improve that. In some extreme cases attempts to deny the existence of that ethnic home education may damage the development of an individual by implanting an inferiority complex, thus degrading a potentially creative and happy citizen into an intellectually and emotionally handicapped person.

The Canadians, learning from the American experience, have buried the "melting pot" idea. They are building a nation of multi-cultured individuals attempting to harvest the values of different ethnic heritages. That policy is expressed by granting public school credits to students for learning the languages and cultures of their parents in ethnic culture classes. I am glad to see that current trends in our schools encourage multi-cultural programs and I share Mr. Skjervold's enthusiasm that that is bound to yield beneficial effects. Provided that we do that properly. That is, if we recognize the contributions of ethnic groups to the development of the American community without exaggerating in favor of the local community and without belittling others. If we acknowledge the cultural and historical heritages of ethnic groups without awakening traditional conflict between some of them. If we praise the values of ethnic cultures we should make certain that we do that within the context of the American culture and do not plant the seeds of foreign loyalty. In other words the writers of these books and the teachers of these subjects must be broadly trained scholars in ethnic as well as in American cultures, histories and social sciences.

The recognition of the cultural benefits of ethnic heritage should not endanger but enrich the values of a still developing American culture. It should make it more colorful, more compassionate and understanding and the "ugly American" will become more like a big brother.

I would like to close my comments with a quotation from the American born son of a poor and illiterate Hungarian immigrant couple. This son is now a professor of English at the University of Minnesota. He learned to read and write Hungarian after he learned to read and write English. Many years later when he had established a scholarly reputation in the history of English literature he began to study Hungarian literature and published a couple of books in English on Hungarian literature. This attraction to the literature of the language of his illiterate parents was a beautiful expression of respect for his own ancestors. He made the following statement a few years ago:

> "I learned that one of the most valuable treasures of life is if one is brought up in two cultures and can call both justly and equally his own."

THE SCHOOLS AND GROUP IDENTITY:
EDUCATING FOR A NEW PLURALISM?

by

Dr. Maynard C. Reynolds

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Maynard C. Reynolds

Mr. Skjervold is surely correct when he says that "America is a nation of diverse social, economic and ethnic groups"; and he has expressed with much sensitivity the need for the appreciation and nurturance of ethnic group identities as parts of school experience. Yet there are very great difficulties about how the schools should respond positively to group identification.

Because of the nature of my experiences, my response to the Skjervold paper begins with reference to the field of special education, that is, to the field of education that serves exceptional (handicapped and gifted) students. I realize that the ideas and practices relating to so-called exceptional students are peripheral to the main concerns of this conference, yet some of the questions that must be faced are the same, I believe. Ideas are tested at their margins, so there should be some profit in examining concepts of group identity and group consciousness in relation to the somewhat peripheral area of special education.

The field of special education tends to be organized in all its practical aspects around groups or categories of persons; not surprisingly, its textbooks are organized in the same way. They include separate chapters on, and our schools tend to have separate programs for, the deaf, the blind, the retarded, the emotionally disturbed, the socially maladjusted, the orthopedically handicapped, the speech handicapped and so on. Lately another rapidly proliferating category has been added;

it consists of students whose school learning is proceeding badly but who don't belong to any of the other groups; they are the so-called learning disabled. Teacher-preparation sequences have been organized in congruence with these same categorical delineations, and public policy, especially funding for educational programs, have used the same narrow, categorical definitions.

The textbooks tend to describe the various categories of handicapped persons in terms of attributes, functions, needs, and institutional arrangements for their lives and services. The chapters summarize the "group base rates" for the category, that is, how much of various traits, needs, and services are represented, and often in comparison with other groups. It is easier to deal with the centralities or averages of groups than with the variances. What emerges, consequently, is a kind of clumping of knowledge around clinical entities, such as the deaf, the blind, and persons with cerebral palsy. Individual differences within the categories receive relatively little attention so that one would think the groups are truly homogeneous. For example, many of us were trained to think of the mentally retarded as rigid and, thus, able to tolerate dull routines to monotonous extremes. People trained to think in such stereotypes undoubtedly reflect them in their relationships with the stereotyped groups.

The whole story is far more complicated, however, Obviously, there has always been some awareness among many educators that the categorical delineations often are applied unfairly to individuals. So, a great deal of effort is made to try to qualify the categorical labels, sometimes at different levels of education. Simple categories are stressed at the "BA" level, and "open" concepts, at the "MA" level. If you go on to work for the Ph.D., you learn that the categories are terribly human constructions, rather than "nature carved at its joints". Someone has said that preceeding through the educational levels means simply being confused at new, more sophisticated levels. I sometimes think that a great deal of the intellectual enterprise consists, first, of classifying phenomena, that is, getting the diversity of any domain into some manageable and useful set of categories; second, of proceeding to learn how to treat the concepts or variables in the classification system as "open-ended" because no one particular quite fits the abstract characterization of the category; and then, finally, to establish that what we have is a continuum of individual differences rather than a series of finite groups. At the last stage, we no longer use the category as a starting point; instead we look to variables that are patterned uniquely for all individuals.

In special education at the moment, there is a tremendous surge of development toward recognizing the uniqueness of each individual and diminishing the use of "categories". New Federal and State legislation mandates an individual educational plan for every handicapped child. Thus, accountability systems are being developed rapidly, with the focus on the individual child.

Yet we see signs of strong group consciousness as well: in class action suits, in parents' organizations, in various organizations for the handicapped and in similar activities. Much social action and legislation are organized around the various groupings or categories. Funding systems and special affirmative action programs are linked to groups, not to individuals. The individuals involved may not always spend a lot of time together, but sometimes they do sharing with, modeling for, counseling, playing with, and supporting one another.

But now come the problems. Let me tell you about a few of the problems we seem to have in special education; some of them will sound familiar to you, I am sure, and I will try to show how they relate to considerations of ethnic groupings.

We have difficulties with decisions that operate directly from group base rates. Boys more frequently than girls have difficulties in schools; that is to say, the base rate for being classified as learning disabled or mentally retarded is higher for boys than for girls. Observing this fact, many people have suggested that perhaps boys should be admitted to school at a later age than girls so that they would be more "mature" and show fewer problems in early school progress. If we were to set different standards of age by sex for admission to school, I have little doubt that we would reduce school learning problems - assuming that school programs remain much as they are.

The problem is that when we organize data by groups they lead us to calculate the outcomes of decisions on the basis of group membership, which inevitably is unfair to individuals. In the boy-girl school admissions issue, it is obvious that many boys are perfectly ready for school at the same age as girls, so they would be penalized by a decision to delay their admissions.

Consider a few more examples outside the realm of special education. Should women be taxed more for retirement because they tend to live longer and thus to use/need more retirement income than men? Should we classify juvenile delinquents by family income? Some data suggest that institutionalized juvenile delinquents whose families are on welfare are poorer risks (i.e., show higher recidivism rates) than delinquents whose families are not on welfare. The "facts" show that it would be in the public interest to make decisions about parole on the basis of these group rates about their families in that it would help to reduce crime. But should the data be used? I understand that the FBI only recently has decided it could employ individuals who have relatives who have criminal records!

Should students with good grades in high school or college receive their automobile insurance at lower rates than other students? Should "other" students or a residual group pay more?

It happens that members of the Mormon Church and Community are "overachievers" in academic settings. (Data of a few years past showed that the State of Utah produced twice as many scientists of high repute as the second ranking state.) Therefore, should persons of the Mormon faith be given an edge for reason of their "values, attitudes, and commitments" in Graduate School admission decisions? If you lean to a "yes" on this one, then what about the other "groups" that show lower rates of success in academic pursuits: Should we tilt decisions against them? In fact, the decisions are tilted against them as soon as one tilts toward any other group - assuming the number of available positions is limited.

The institutions of our society are chock full of decision processes that take account of group base rates as well as of data about individuals. In a sense, as we generate curriculums about groups, there is a tendency to develop rank orderings of the groups and to move toward making decisions about individuals on the basis of group data. It is particularly troublesome when the group data are ill-founded or fictitious, as in the case of ranking groups by their presumed basic educability or when we describe the deaf as predisposed to paranoia. This comes close to what we mean by terms like "prejudice" and "stereotyping".

The general question I'm raising concerns how group-oriented information should be generated and used. Should we run up data on all varieties of groups - by age, sex, race, ethnic origins - and then let institutions use the data? Should schools write textbooks on these data, much as has been done on special education groups? How can we avoid the unfairness of carrying group images, concepts and data too far in relating to individuals? This problem is very large in work with handicapped children and I propose that it can be a problem in other domains as well.

One partial solution in this area is simply to exclude all "group base rate data" in making decisions about individuals. We do that to some extent in Civil Rights and Affirmative Action programs. In this case, we would say that "group data" are relevant only as alerts to do something else that may produce data about individuals and thus be of assistance in decision making about individuals. For example, we might say that we will not start boys in schools later than girls but, rather, we will research to find out, if we can, what it is that creates the group differences; then we can look for ways of dealing with the variables that account for the differences in some constructive manner. To continue with this example, we might find that maturity in language skills is what makes the difference, and that it is something we can deal with fairly at the level of individuals. In this way we "get behind" the group base rate data and learn to deal with variables that differentiate individuals. But it's not always a simple matter to get behind the "base rates" and it's often the case that there is profit for institutions and agencies which trade in group rate data.

The Liberal's Dilemma. Another of the problems in education concerns the extent to which we organize the community in a decentralized or centralized pattern. Should schools be decentralized so that there is strong community (parental) control? To some extent we get such parental and community control through private school systems. Can we permit even the political control as well as administrative functions concerned with public schools to be decentralized? At times, it seems that such a move advances pluralism and the liberals (I include myself) tend to support it, as if to say, "Before a group or community can progress it must first close ranks". The decentralization or community-parent control movement involves an affirmation of the family role in setting values, socialization patterns, honoring of traditions and like matters.

But once we get a large measure of decentralization, and local citizen control, problems of narrowness or parochialism tend to appear. The city or school district as a whole may look pluralistic on paper but the actual experiences of students may tend to be narrow and circumscribed. Then the liberal must face the very real question: How can children be pluralistic in their attitudes if they lack experience in dealing directly with differences? Then the tendency is to reverse the pendulum with all of the enthusiasm of the earlier decade when the travel was in an opposite direction.

In special education, we have confronted these same problems in the special schools for the cerebral palsied, the retarded, or the other groups. It seems nice to have your own brick and mortar and program control for a while; but awareness about the need to reach out and form links with others soon enters. It may seem that a community has a broad and diverse special education program (pluralism) because it maintains services for a number of categories, but when the categories are quite separate, the children's experiences are anti-pluralistic in fact.

I'm reminded of a story told by Dwight Allen about a small California fishing village. It was compact and homogeneous in many aspects and ran a very conservative school program, that is, until the "hippies" moved in and started having children. As these children reached school age, the school board's problems mounted. Their solution was to create two schools - a fisherman's school and a hippie school. The community settled back in all of its pluralism and proceeded to indoctrinate its children narrowly by means of parental controls. Decentralization as policy presents an ambiguous agenda as far as pluralism is concerned.

Someone has said that the liberal in our society is almost foreordained to lead the pendulum swings from decentralization to centralization and back again.

I suggest that we need to focus very carefully on where and how we envisage pluralism. If we achieve it at the community level, will it be at the expense of narrowness and anti-pluralism for the individual child in school?

A Note of Optimism. The problems indeed are complex, as Mr. Skjervold has noted. But not hopeless.

I pin the greatest hope on the schools in which children can experience pluralism as part of their daily life, where their fellow students represent diversity and the curriculum shows genuine appreciation of traditions, needs, and values of many cultures rather than but one or a few. Very often the children accommodate to such pluralism more readily than do their teachers. For example, children do very well in accommodating to a blind classmate; too often the worried teacher or principal perceives a problem that isn't there. I once asked a neurologist what advice he would give to teachers about epilepsy. His response was, "Tell them just to remember it's the kid who's having the fit".

I believe we adults tend to do a very bad job in giving lessons to one another about handicapped or ethnic groups. We tend, I think, to run up the group base rates and create stereotyped images from them. Perhaps we can do better by bussing ourselves a bit more and engaging ourselves in real projects in pluralistic environments. Somehow, I'm more trustful that worthwhile things will happen when we dig a well together than when we merely talk together. Attitudes of acceptance and appreciation are the overtones—the secondaries that add real quality to life. But perhaps we need to come to them through primary experiences which are real rather than textbookish. At least, that seems to me to be one lesson of work with the handicapped.

PUBLIC POLICY: ETHNICITY AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

by

Mr. Earl Craig

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Earl D. Craig, Jr.

The purpose and hope of this paper is to discuss logically and coherently a topic that is not only timely but fraught with strong opinions, extreme emotionalism, allegations of insincerity and bias and of immense importance to the future of the country. I will attempt to avoid extreme emotionalism and invidious allegations, but will offer strong opinions, tempered by an awareness of the importance of public policies that enhance ethnic, cultural and racial development and institutional change. Some of you will disagree. Hopefully, none of you will be offended.

This paper will be divided into four parts, a discussion of: first, ethnicity and pluralism in American history and society; second, institutions and the process of changing institutions; third, the unique role of public policy; and last, some conclusions about the relationship among these three drawn through an application to one particular societal problem and public policy issue.

Ethnicity

It is often claimed that ethnicity has played a unique role in American history. I would agree with that claim. Ethnic, cultural or racial grouping is a way—positively or negatively—that individuals, families and segments of society are defined and define themselves. It can be the excuse for exclusion, discrimination, oppression, and even self-hatred. But a sense of belonging to a particular ethnic, cultural or racial group can likewise be a source of physical and emotional support, can provide a set of mores and a sense of direction, and can be a means of access to power or a successful career.

This society of immigrants has been one in which ethnicity has virtually always played a major role, significantly more so than in the countries from which some of our ancestors came. In the beginnings of this nation, we did not have (except for those based on race) the feudal, aristocratic structures that ordered all political, economic and social relationships as they had in Europe. Likewise, the people of this country have resisted throughout our history attempts (whether by the newly created American aristocracy or by various brands of Marxists) to define themselves exclusively or even primarily in terms of class. The vast majority of even the most economically deprived seem, almost as a matter of faith or vague ideology, to reject a class-based explanation of our society. All of this brings us back to my premise that the dominant identifying and organizing "difference" in American society has been race and ethnicity.

With five brief examples, I will attempt to show: 1) how historical events have served to define and redefine ethnic groups; 2) how different cultural artifacts were used in this process; and 3) how these groups have had profound effects upon the development of this country.

1. When they first arrived in this country in large numbers, the Irish were systematically denied access to the important societal institutions. However, through a system of strong internal allegiance within institutions where access

could be gained, considerable power and influence within the society as a whole were achieved in a short time. The stories of Frank Skeffington, the final fictional machine mayor of Boston, or the Irish constable, reflect this history. Their use of the avenues available through urban politics and the Roman Catholic Church in the great eastern cities dramatically changed the status of the Irish, the history of these cities, the whole Northeast and the country.

2. Two very specific events in recent world history radically changed this particular ethnic group's sense of itself and its role in American society. At the same time they profoundly affected American life and politics. Clearly, despite the long history of close communities among Jews in America, I would argue that the genocide practiced by Nazi Germany and the creation of the state of Israel profoundly and fundamentally altered the overall American Jewish community's definition of itself and its role in American society. The more unified community's sense of vulnerability, susceptibility and purpose, induced by historical events outside the United States, has created an overarching unity of purpose in the community itself. This special unity, as with coalescence of any kind, brought with it enhanced power and influence. The impact likewise continues to have overwhelming influence on the community and its perceived role in our society.

3. This third group achieved what may at first glance appear trivial, but which, upon reflection, must be seen as unique and profound. The group literally changed the

dominant society's way of describing it. At the same time it enhanced its view of itself and its importance within the society. External (and largely, but not wholly symbolic) factors were not only manifestations of substantive social change but were themselves an integral part of this social change process.

The Black community in America has seen a variety of social and political movements from Nat Turner, W.E.B. DuBois and the NAACP to Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. However, I would argue that the confluence of the Civil Rights Movement and Martin Luther King, the rise of the Nation of Islam, the liberation of colonial Africa and the phenomenal growth of television produced a unique redefinition of self, goals, and methodology within our community. And most important, the changes and the redefinitions were easy to see in dress, hair, language and the many linkages to Africa. No other group has been able within such a very short period of time to change the very word members of the group and people outside used to identify it. The word very quickly went from "colored" and "Negro" to "Black". Insignificant though it may seem, this language change stands as an ongoing manifestation of the new role of Blacks in America.

4. The Spanish language is a necessary vehicle for the development of Latino communities in this country. The struggle to preserve it has become a central coalescing factor for Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and other Latinos in recent

years, an experience quite different from that of European immigrants. Language has always been recognized as a source of societal strength and cohesion. Only recently, however, have the Latino communities in the United States exhibited such a strong, ongoing capability to protect not only their language but to multiply its impact by organizing around the issue of its preservation.

5. Because of a unique historical status, this final group has special access to one of the dominant defining mechanisms of modern society, the legal system. Through the legal system, this group has recently begun the process of shaping its power and making claims on the wealth of the nation after decades of deprivation. This process in the courts has simultaneously strengthened the group and started to reverse an explicit governmental policy of cultural destruction. Throughout the history of white people in this country, the culture and spirituality of Indian people have managed to survive the various policies of isolation, assimilation and direct assault. However, the treaties between the United States government and the various Indian nations have provided a special leverage. The final resolution of the multitude of litigation based upon the treaties clearly awaits further developments. However, the cases to date illustrate that this special reserve of power possessed by Indian people—standing within the legal system—has enhanced their sense of self while supporting ever widening claims

on the dominant society.

These specific examples have shown that in a variety of ways ethnicity has been and is a potential source of strength for powerless individuals and groups within our society. As a part of this strength, however, these groups cannot and must not forget their history. Blacks must not forget slavery; Jews the Holocaust; nor the Japanese their internment camps during World War II. These remembrances, individual and collective, strengthen the individual, the groups and the society in a number of ways. The contribution is much more than that characterized by the truism, "Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it." These historical events cement relationships, set moral limits on actions by individuals and society, as well as instruct future action.

Ultimately, ethnicity must be viewed as a positive factor in modern day America. It offers great potential for change and creativity in our society. Few more potentially powerful forces exist. True, ethnicity holds the equally great danger of a rekindling of the racial and ethnic hatred that has been so much a part of our history. That risk must be faced by those seeking social change. But, I conclude that ethnicity must be viewed as a positive force worth the risks inherent in its use: 1) because of the intrinsic value of a multi-racial, multi-ethnic society that is unique in all the world; and 2) because the racial and ethnic minorities of this country simply are not "going to go away".

Institutions

America is a nation of strong institutions. Our governmental bodies, churches, banks, corporations, political parties, labor unions, media and schools are all among the most powerful in the world. Strong institutions, such as ours, are not changed by good will, at least not by good will alone. Experience and formal organizational theory, in fact, suggest just the opposite.

The major characteristic of social organizations is the impulse to maintain themselves. The stated goals of an institution or organization are secondary to the unstated goal of maintaining itself. There have been many examples of the cadre of a political party, be it Democratic, Republican, Socialist, or Communist, in this country or abroad, not supporting the candidate most likely to get elected if that candidate is "not one of us", i.e., if that candidate is not committed to maintaining or enhancing the power of those in control of the organizational apparatus.

Similarly, Jimmy Carter has discovered, as did Richard Nixon, John Kennedy and Dwight Eisenhower before him, that the institutional might of the various federal bureaucracies is more formidable than any foreign Cold War adversary. The resistance to change is endemic to bureaucracies. This is true regardless of whether it is the State Department, the National Park Service, the Office of Education, or the County Welfare Department, the City Police Department or the Pollution Control Agency.

The same tendency is manifested in the resurgent resistance to the Catholic Church's move to native language in its liturgy. The efforts of Archbishop Lefebvre of France are really no different than those of leaders of nonsecular institutions.

There is a strong temptation to see this resistance as a malignancy to be surgically removed. I suggest that it is not a malignancy, not an abnormality, but an inevitability. This impulse to maintain current values, current objectives, current modes of operation and current personnel is a natural characteristic of social organization—as a matter of fact, a primary characteristic. And it is neither intrinsically good nor intrinsically evil. It can be either, and sometimes both, simultaneously.

When groups within a society of strong institutions seek change, the institutions respond, as they must, by resisting. The inevitable result is conflict. Conflict in and of itself is not bad. People do differ on basic questions of values and methods by which institutions should function or change. These differences are the basis of the conflicts.

Social change that affects institutions—and there is no social change that does not affect major societal institutions—must create conflict. This reminds me of the story of the married couple that says, "We've been married for 40 years and never had an argument or a fight." I say to you that these two people have not had a healthy marriage. No two individuals—none—agree on every matter of importance in their relationship. No argument in that marriage really means the total acquiescence of one individual to subservience.

So too in society. Different groups within society clash over issues of importance. Without this, social change is impossible. Those in society who say they do not want conflict, are saying, in effect, that they do not want change. A seeker of social change cannot run from or ignore conflict. To do so is worse than inaction. It is an open invitation to further deterioration of the situation or, at best, a continuation of the status quo.

It is appropriate at this point to quote from a speech made by the Black abolitionist, Fredrick Douglas, in 1847:

> "We give a word of the philosophy of reform. The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet born of her august claims have been born of honest struggle. The conflict must be agitating, exciting and all absorbing, for the time being putting tumult to silence. It must do this, or it does nothing. If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Men who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing the ground. They want the rain without the thunder and lightning. They want the oceans without the awful roar of its mighty waters. The struggle may be a moral one. Or it may be a physical one. Or it may be both moral and physical. But there must be a struggle. For power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will."

The words apply equally well today.

Public Policy

Policy making is the way in which society and its institutions resolve disagreements concerning values. Each day corporations make policy decisions that resolve internal conflicts. Many of these same decisions have far-reaching impact on our society and the rest of the world. Decisions to diversify or consolidate have obvious ripple effects. The choice between following principle and paying a "necessary" bribe to a foreign official constitutes a policy decision of some importance. This type of decision has been and continues to be made. In the past decisions on corporate investment in South Africa have affected American foreign policy. The support given to apartheid by a corporate decision to pay differential wages to blacks and whites, as other corporations in South Africa do, has had a significant impact on the nature of South Africa society, and, I would argue, despite the efforts of many to induce moral myopia, an impact on our society as well.

The public sector has also been called upon to resolve value conflicts. In reality, this is the heart of legislative activity, court proceedings and the functioning of the executive branch. The choice between tariffs and other forms of protectionism and free trade; the right of mine workers to strike and the nation's need for coal are only two of the hundreds of policy, i.e., value, choices with which the public sector has been faced in recent months.

And, the best, if not the only, place to resolve fundamental conflicts in this society is in the public sector. This is a strong assertion. But upon much reflection, I find it defensible.

Despite the claims of Milton Friedman and others, the free market has consistently proven itself incapable, in my estimation, of resolving fundamental conflicts in this society affecting poor and minority peoples. Only in the public sector have the essentially powerless had any "access" to decision-makers or to the decision-making process or any relevant "currency" to function in that process. Even though the poor and "discriminated-against" could not get to the corporate executive, religious leaders or school superintendents, they did have access to the federal court system. Without the political "currency" that money and position provide, in the public sector the poor at least have the "currency" of voting power, moral suasion, public demonstration, free speech, or disruption.

My claim is that the public sector is now preferable to the private as the adjudicating mechanism for the powerless. This is a product of our history and our institutions. It is far from ideal, but the claims I make about the public sector are not absolute—it will change over time. Maybe even for the worse. But for now, there is no better arena in which the powerless can operate.

In examining the possibilities for social change, one must grasp the "man-made" nature of the value structure of this and any society. The argument of a recent defender of South African apartheid sheds some light on this claim.

This defender justified the continuation of apartheid because of the threat to private property that he and others saw in majority rule. Even if one were to grant the existence of such a danger—which I don't—one must see the giant, unsubstantiated leap inherent in his position. He erroneously and invidiously transformed his value position regarding a single, societal artifact, private property, into an objective statement having direct bearing on a wide range of public policy issues. Clearly his concept of private property (to say nothing of his racism) embodies more important values for him than the freedoms of speech, press and association and majority rule. The point is, it's "his" choice, about his values, translated into public policy.

Society must determine through public discussion and public policy which values are to be paramount. These decisions determine the nature of a society. Clearly the relative priority of values can and must change as time passes and circumstances evolve.

Continuation of the status quo in any society reflects a number of crucial value choices. This is even more important in a society experiencing rapid change, such as ours. Because values are incorporated in the current institutions and modes of operation, they are often not explicit. But they are there, and must be seen as such.

Choices among values can and must be directly confronted. Society is responsible for its value changes. Likewise, society must be responsible for the value choices that are "made" with the continuation of the status quo. It cannot shirk its responsibility through a timid reliance on the status quo.

Ethnicity, Pluralism, Institutional Change and Public Policy: A Look at Quotas

Our history and present day reality suggest that people see themselves and others in terms of ethnic and racial groupings. It is therefore naive to believe that you can devise public policy that is "color blind". The American "melting pot" never really existed. Moreover, it was and remains a lousy idea. To frame issues squarely involved in differences of race and ethnicity in terms of policies that ignore those differences is to operate in a dream world. Race and ethnicity are crucial societal variables that must be taken into account in public action.

American institutions have initiated and perpetuated numerous negative conditions grounded in ethnic or racial differences. In other words, their activities have been anything but color blind.

As a matter of documentable record, minority peoples have been and continue to be underrepresented in a number of professional positions and among the employed generally. They are overrepresented among the unemployed and underemployed. I am prepared to place blame for these conditions, but blame is irrelevant. Blame-placing and the guilt underlying it are not legitimate reasons for the development of policies to correct these deplorable conditions.

The heightened sense of ethnicity in our society, particularly among Blacks, Indians and Latinos, has created a new societal dynamic. Issues related to their non-participation, in the broadest sense, will not be wished away. They will not be dissipated until there is a substantial narrowing of the gap in real conditions. I think this is one of the lessons of the last 20 years of our history.

The setting of policy in the public sector of this democratic society is the only way this pressure for social change and the underlying conflict of values can be resolved. The pressure will not go away. The public sector will either affirmatively develop solutions or stifle the conflict through its police power. Some form of overt action will have to be taken in response to some highly visible conflicts and movements for social change by significant sectors of our society.

Good will or moral suasion is not the answer. To change through good will institutions that have perpetuated ethnic and racial differences and have leadership and personnel who benefit from these very differences is a pipedream. Exhortations to change are likewise ineffective.

In the areas of employment, training and conferring credentials, this leads to the inescapable conclusion that publicly developed and administered quotas, or some variation thereof, are absolutely necessary if the goal is to get more Black doctors, Indian lawyers and Latino dentists. There is no alternative!

The two major suggested alternatives to quotas, moral suasion and remedial education, hold little real promise. They amount, in effect, to suggestions of "trust us" or "wait a little while longer". They are not acceptable.

I am prepared to say that quotas are not good for our society. They are, in the last analysis, bad for our society and much of what has made it strong. At the same time I may say that the continued relegation of large segments of our population to a far less than equitable share of the economic and political pie is likewise bad.

In light of the nature of institutions, ethnicity and the process of social change, it is impossible to be committed to improving the status of minority people and opposed to quotas in public and private institutions. The choice must be made between the two competing values of equitable participation and free competition. There is no easy way out. Since I must choose between these two very undesirable options, there is no question that I opt for quotas.

In today's America one cannot be committed to action to eliminate inadequate participation in societal activities and at the same time be opposed to quotas. Perhaps one can simply oppose quotas and sincerely wish racial discrimination would go away. But one cannot oppose quotas and be committed to action to eliminate those conditions.

I realize this is not a pleasant prescription for American society. I make it only after long deliberation and extensive review of our history. The issue of quotas cuts across fundamental values in American life. The intransigence of the problems they are designed to address, in part a function of endemic institutional resistance, necessitates the use of an equally powerful weapon. Ethnicity, and race, and of late, sex, comprise this response. While the dangers of abuse are great and the values being challenged fundamental, the long-term danger of inaction, postponement or empty promises is even greater. We must decide to commit ourselves as a society to truly equitable participation in the sharing of its riches.

PUBLIC POLICY: ETHNICITY AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

by

Mr. Jose Trejo

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Jose H. Trejo

Attempting to respond to an issue as controversial as public policy and its impact on ethnicity is indeed a difficult task and it's made more difficult by the fact that in almost every instance I agree with Mr. Earl Craig, our main speaker.

It's interesting to note that the stereotyped American way of life—working father, two car garage someplace in suburbia and a white picket fence, or an incredibly wholesome and happy farm family, that includes grandpa, grandma, a pick-up truck, the cat and the dog and of course plenty of Country Time Lemonade, is not only a recent phenomena, but largely a figment of our imagination.

As Mr. Craig pointed out, "Ethnicity in our society has always played a major role". We may not have a class society, based on birth, we do have a class society based on job status and economic affluence. This is true of the entire society, including the new American aristocracy. While there is no doubt that the dominant identifying and organizing "difference" in American society has been race and ethnicity, we can't overlook the fact that wealth and job status do play a major role in determining which members of our society will ultimately impact on its public policies.

Let me expand this a little farther. America was founded and prospered due to some basic underlying principles—two of which are a capitalistic system based on optimum profit and the work ethic. Whether we personally agree or disagree with these principles, they nevertheless remain as an integral part of our way of life. How do we usually introduce ourselves?

or are introduced by others?

Name: John Smith, Employment: 3M Company, Position: Vice President, Marketing

Name: Juan Lopez, Employment: Twin City Hide, Position: Floor sweeper

Name: Jane Brown, Employment: None, Position: AFDC recipient

Without doubt, in our society, these are the most important considerations in placing an individual in a class system. How is each one of these persons looked upon by this society? Definitely, they are not considered equal neither in monetary compensation nor in social status. Therefore, even though race and ethnicity are the dominant identifying and organizing differences in American society, we can't overlook social status based on employment and economic well-being.

All ethnic groups struggled for better economic conditions and the opportunity to obtain meaningful employment. The Irish, Poles, Italians, each in their turn were kept from the labor force or at best relegated to the lowest positions in the labor hierarchy until they either assimilated into the majority society by relinquishing their ethnicity or formed their own institutions. Today's racial and ethnic minorities are experiencing the same fate. This clearly points out the reluctance of the "established group" to permit any form of upper mobility that will place these ethnic and racial groups on an equal basis.

To be unemployed and to be a recipient of public assistance carries with it an incredibly negative stigma. To deny employment and its rewards is to deny, not only participation in this society's determination of its policies, but also even the right to share in the formulation of these policies. Why else have the most difficult accomplishments for ethnic minorities been equal employment and the educational opportunities necessary to become employable?

The development of strong ethnic associations came about primarily because these groups were denied equal participation in the socio-economic system. Even though it's commonly assumed that these associations were primarily culture preservation groups, they went far beyond culture-consciousness and became involved not only in the group's cultural preservation, but also in its economic and social progress.

While ethnicity is definitely a positive factor and offers great potential for change and creativity, let me venture to say that a culture-conscious movement, by itself, is a manifestation of our response to the inferior status which the larger society has relegated to us. Fortunately, most of our racial and ethnic institutions have more concerns than the cultural sensitivity of society at large. The need to organize politically, to gain visibility, to educate ourselves and to develop the capital resources to obtain the necessary economic power are now recognized to be as important as maintaining our ethnicity and racial identity.

It's noteworthy that these racial and ethnic movements did not begin by working within the "established system".

I have come to the irregrettable conclusion that the politics of conflict and confrontation with the core majority are necessary. If only to get the majority's attention. The problem with the politics of disruption is that the gains are, at best, only temporary and at worst—illusionary. We need to work within the system in order to form the necessary alliances with the core majority to effect permanent change. The system must not only react to pressure, but also change its basic structure and policy to accommodate these changes.

As Mr. Craig states, "the resistance to change is endemic to social organizations and their major characteristics is the impulse to maintain themselves". As he suggests, "this is an inevitability, which is neither intrinsically good nor intrinsically evil". Unfortunately, Mr. Craig's assumption is that institutions, while maintaining their existence, do not change. However, institutions do change, if only to continue to exist. A good example is the March of Dimes Organization, which was originally formed to combat polio. When the dangers of this dreaded disease were minimized, the organization diversified into other areas—namely birth defects. Did the organization go out of existence, because its primary objective had been reached? Of course not! It just diversified to justify its existence and continue to survive.

New issues arise; new needs are found, changes in attitudes and responses to these changes all serve to either modify, create or terminate institutions. These institutions can be said to be the visible end-result of these ideas. Another example in the changeability of public policy is the chemical abuse area. When federal funds were made available, because of public concern and pressure, there was an immediate reaction to create agencies and develop programs to meet the needs, and perhaps not publicly stated, "to cash in on the bonanza". At the peak of this activity there were over 240 agencies dealing directly or indirectly with this problem in the metropolitan area. When funding diminished some of these agencies went out of existence, while others diversified in order to survive.

While I fully agree with Mr. Craig regarding the reluctance of institutions to change, I believe that most institutions will modify their operations or beliefs if their existence depends on it. Survivability is more desirable than rigid dogma, in most cases.

Ethnic and racial minorities, through a concerted and continued effort can bring about changes in public policy. Whether these changes occur in the public or in the private sector is not as important as the fact that these changes can happen.

As Mr. Craig points out, changes are more likely to occur in the public sector. However, we can't overlook the fact that the private sector will react to public pressure, adverse publicity and economic boycotts. It's to our best interest to either determine or modify the type of reaction.

We definitely can impact on the private sector, even if it's through the public institutions, such as the courts, or through direct confrontation and conflict. There is no doubt in my mind that the resistance to change will mandate a long struggle on our part. Nevertheless, this resistance to change is not absolute and in the long run many institutions will find change more desirable than continued conflict. The American democratic system has provided the necessary tools to bring about the changes, but perhaps not the necessary financial resources.

It's interesting to note that American society has traditionally been described by the majority as the "melting pot", while the Spanish-speaking community describes this society as a tapestry. In a tapestry, each color maintains its identity, while contributing to the whole design. If the colors were to fade or run into each other, the tapestry would lose its beauty.

Unfortunately majority institutions have viewed their main function to be that of assimilating everyone into a homogeneous group, without regard to the rich cultural and ethnic characteristics that give value and meaning to our lives. American history is replete with the wholesale destruction of ethnic groups in the name of Americanization. Entire cultures have been willingly or unwillingly assimilated without regard to personal needs of identity and a sense of belonging. Only the unmeltable societies, mostly racial, remain as separately identifiable groups. Therefore it is our responsibility, as racial and ethnic minorities, not only to halt this homogenization process, but also to reverse its trend.

Great dangers always accompany great opportunities, the possibility of destruction is always present in the act of creation. Our future depends heavily on our willingness to accept the necessary risks and pay the necessary price to maintain our ethnic and racial identities. We can't advance in this society unless more of us are willing to become actively involved and sacrifice our personal interests, if necessary, to guarantee the creation of public policies and attitudes that will not only provide for our advancement, but also for our ethnic identity.

Finally, let me conclude by sharing these thoughts which were inspired by the ideal purposes for which this conference was called. I was thinking about the incredible potential of a diversified American society, where everyone could realize the dream of justice, freedom, equality, cooperation without surrendering certain cultural and social values which makes us unique. Thinking hopefully of a time that might come quite soon when we learn not merely new knowledge, but new humility and new wisdom. A time to inspire and to create; a time when we live in harmony with each other's cultural values because we understand the incredibly important role that ethnicity has played in the creation and development of this country. A time when the commitment to cultural pluralism is a fact and not a fantasy.

PUBLIC POLICY: ETHNICITY AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

by

Mr. Samuel I. Horowitz

Mr. Horowitz is Assistant Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council, Anti-Defamation League of Minnesota and Dakotas.

Samuel Horowitz

Mr. Craig touches upon several important characteristics and processes of ethnicity and ethnic group behavior which have increasingly manifested themselves as we have witnessed the ethnic explosion in the last decade. These characteristics include degree of access to societal institutions, a sense of history with a common past and perhaps common future, self-description both en famille within the ethnic group itself, but also vis a vis other groups in the society, a common language and preservation of language, and position within the legal framework of the society.

The interface of the individual and group both in our historical development and today must be called in a sense schizophrenic. We speak of rugged individualism, Horatio Alger success stories, individual merit, judging a person on his or her own merit, and the right to be so judged. Mr. Craig notes quite correctly that since the beginnings of this nation, we have not had the feudal, or aristocratic structures that ordered all of society in many of the "old countries" where the immigrant waves originated. This has enabled a flowering of individual creativity and potential that has been the envy of many other societies.

However, if we examine our historical experience we find that group action, behavior and identification has played an enormous role in the welfare of individual members of the group. This has varied greatly by region, occupation, historical period and other variables. It is also difficult to analyze the exact influence of group membership. The now classic

Beyond the Melting Pot by Glazer and Moynihan attempted this analysis in the case of New York City in what appears now in hindsight to be "poor sociology".

I dwell on this ambivalence, because I think it to be at the core of the present affirmative action-reverse discrimination-quotas debate.

It was originally thought that if one simply removed barriers, disregarding other factors, individuals would find their way into occupations in schools and other areas in which they had not been represented before. Traditionally political philosophers have seen the organizing principle of liberal societies to be not hostility to groups and sub-cultures, but a requirement that the mechanisms of the state are prohibited from noticing groupness.

While conditions have improved in our country, no one is so naive today as we were in the heady days of the 1960's when everything was felt to be possible.

Yet in the value conflict I have elaborated, and I might add constitutional conflict, I believe that there are very profound ranges to our society in the imposition of a quota system. Quotas cannot be benign. They are intrinsically malignant. The concept of quotas is wrong in principle and bad in practice. Individuals are reduced to a single identifiable attribute by an immutable characteristic of birth.

Furthermore, in our pluralistic society, we are a nation of minorities, with literally hundreds of religious, ethnic

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Furthermore, in our pluralistic society, we are a nation of minorities, with literally hundreds of religious, ethnic and racial groups, each of which is vulnerable to prejudice and in need of protection.

Institutionalized quotas may lead to demands for proportional representation in many or all areas of the public and private rector. We may be led down the road to a bitter fragmentation and Balkanization of our society with each group asserting its percentile of the local and/or national population for jobs, government positions and college admissions. A quota system may also boomerang and be used as a tool against proponents as it traditionally has been used against minorities in the past.

Lest this audience feel that I have portrayed an exaggerated view of the divisive dangers of quotas, I will cite two examples.

Jeno F. Pelucci, President of the Italian-American Foundation writes in the Minneapolis Tribune of December 5, 1977:

> "A misconception about the Bakke case is that whites are against blacks on the issue of affirmative action.
>
> For Italian-Americans and other white ethnics, at least, that simply is not true. In fact, we're more in favor of affirmative action than blacks are—because we are yet to benefit from it, and we need it badly. The fact is that Americans of Eastern and Southern European stock—Italians, Poles, Slavs, Lithuanians, Hungarians and others—are about as underrepresented in higher education as are blacks.
>
> We are certainly much worse off than Orientals, who were also given special treatment by the University of California Medical School at Davis. In fact, most of the data show that Orientals do better than whites educationally, in terms both of test scores and of years of school completed. Which means they do much better than white ethnic Americans. Yet they got the benefit of Davis's affirmative action program, and we didn't.

Reminiscent of President Carter's campaign remarks covering "ethnic purity", is the situation in the Los Angeles school system cited by Eliot Marshall in the New Republic of October 15, 1977:

> "Los Angeles has been under pressure for several years to take some affirmative action not just in hiring and promoting but also in assigning its teachers to schools. The last is the most resented stipulation, because there are teachers in every category who would like to stay where they are. But to achieve statistical balance, blacks, whites, Hispanics and Orientals are being shuffled around the area so that every school will have roughly the same percentage of minority teachers—30 percent. To escape the shuffle, some uncooperative types identified themselves as being what they were not. A few 'minority' teachers turned "white", and more whites became minorities. Suddenly there were lots of American Indians. The school board, in exasperation, responded by creating 'ethnic review committees.'
>
> Betty Gardin, a consultant to the Los Angeles Board of Education who helped develop the ethnic review plan, explained last week how it works. If a teacher's recent ethnic self-identification differs from the ethnic label in the school system's files, that teacher is made the subject of an ethnic 'discrepancy report.' These teachers are asked to come in for a special visit with the review committee. The committee is composed of 'two members from the ethnicity that people want to change from and three from the group they wish to change to.' Thus the more desirable group retains the majority power to screen out interlopers. After reviewing the personal documents, the committee holds a 'kind of interview with the people when they are unable to provide verification of their lineage. They also have a conversation kind of thing with them in order to determine whether their switch is a valid one.' Asked what documentation is required Ms. Gardin said, 'any official document that indicates their racial or ethnic origin, as opposed to just their place of birth, because we all know that you can go anywhere and be born.' Birth certificates, baptismal certificates, discharge papers, anything will do if it gives proof of at least one fourth of your racial ancestry. Everyone gets a day in court. In a sweet voice Ms. Gardin explained, 'If we deny someone, and they feel that we have not seen everything...we offer them the opportunity to say 'I would like to come and talk with you about it and present additional information.' So we're not cutting off anybody without a chance to present their side of the case.' Ms. Gardin is not amused by ethnic cheats:

> 'We don't feel that people ought to be able to switch their identity in order to prevent certain things from happening to them.' Some people, she added, are 'very sensitive' about the whole business.
>
> Los Angeles is not alone. Teachers in New York City who are being rehired this fall after layoffs last year receive their school assignments by lottery. But there are two separate boxes to draw from, one for minorities and another next to it for whites. Children in several Queens school districts are undergoing an integration shuffle this year, and some who listed themselves as blacks or Hispanic were suspected by school officials of having lied. They were asked to report to the board of education offices for visual confirmation."

What we have begun to witness is what Prof. Douglas Risberg of St. Cloud State University has called the either-or problem, with the battle raging among various oppressed groups (and it should be added within these groups) about whose oppression should be the focus of public policy, the media and political party organization. He states,

> "Up to now, the debates on the questions have generally been placed into an either-or framework: Racism or sexism, focus or integrated, homosexual or heterosexual, more oppressed vs. less oppressed, etc. This perspective leads to changes such as women are taking resources that rightfully belong to Blacks; Blacks are only concerned for their own welfare which is often at the expense of Native Americans; Native Americans won't cooperate; Minority men oppress minority women; If Blacks and women get jobs, whites lose them. And so the argument goes, and everyone loses. The oppressed fight among themselves and oppression continues."

I do not believe that affirmative action is the basis for or equivalent to affirmative action. It has yet to be demonstrated that there is no other way than racial, ethnic or sexual quotas to assist individuals in participating fully in the mainstream of American life.

What we have not seen is a demonstration on the part of policy makers that they understand the requirements for bringing segments of the population on the bottom rungs of the economic ladder into the system. Furthermore, they have not been willing to really level with the American people as to the commitment and resources that will be needed to get the job accomplished. Both leaders and lead would rather blame the victims than discuss substantive changes in the criminal justice, educational and welfare systems.

IMAGES OF PLURALISM IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

by

Dr. Karen Hoyle

Dr. Hoyle is Curator of the Children's Literature Research Collections of the University of Minnesota Libraries.

Karen Nelson Hoyle

Ethnic pluralism in adult fiction about the Upper Midwest is manifested in such classics as Ole Rolvaag's Giants in the Earth, Victor Moberg's The Emigrants, and Willa Cather's My Antonia, but is less evident in the field of children's literature. There are significant books for children among the 39,253 presently in print[1] which identify ethnic groups. For the purpose of this paper, fiction only is considered. Biography and autobiography, folktales and legends, and non-fiction are easily identifiable in such books as Subject Guide to Children's Books in Print, while fiction often has to be read in its entirety to find references to ethnic groups. Only books presently in print and therefore readily available for purchase are described and listed in the bibliography so that a teacher, librarian, or parent can acquire the book from a bookstore, jobber, or publisher rather than search with the assistance of a second-hand book dealer.

The American Indian is the most prominent ethnic group represented in children's fiction today. In the 1977-78 edition of Subject Guide to Children's Books in Print there are disparities in the subject headings. There are headings for "Indians of North America—Fiction", and sub-headings for "Chippewa", "Ojibway", "Dakota", "Sioux", and "Oglala", dependent on the designation the author made of the tribe in the Upper Midwest. The books are both historical and contemporary.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow immortalized a legend recorded by Henry Schoolcraft about the Ojibwaj Hiawatha and his Dakota maiden, Minnehaha, in The Song of Hiawatha (Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1855), but he used Iroquois names which he thought more poetic, and he also used the meter of the Finnish epic poem, the "Kalevala". Two editions are presently in print, one of them adapted to fictional form by Allen Chaffee as The Story of Hiawatha (Random House, 1951). The majority of books about the American Indian are by white authors, and have a frontier setting. The plots of the books published during the last fifty years have friendly encounters between the frontiersman and the Indian. In the preface to her book, The Topsy Turvy Family (Knopf, 1943), Emma Brock wrote that "It was in journals and memoirs of Minnesota pioneers that I found suggestions for many happenings in this book."[2] In one episode, an Indian enters the frontier cabin and picks up the baby, Sukey, and grabs the mother's arm. When the mother and children scream, he explains that his papoose is sick. Then Mrs. Wiggin goes willingly to the village to put the "papoose's feet in hot mustard water. She rubbed his chest with goose grease and she wrapped him in warm blankets."[3] In gratitude, the Indian gives the white family a horse and he brings Sukey a gourd rattle just like the one his own papoose has. "Indian John" is prominent in Carol Ryrie Brink's Caddie Woodlawn (Macmillan, 1935). Maggie Flying Bird (Morrow, 1974), by Marion Lawson, centers on the identity problem of a woman with a Potawatomi-Chippewa mother and a white trader father.

This woman was born in 1819 and lived in both Indian villages and white settlements.

In a contemporary story, Just One Indian Boy (Atheneum, 1974), Elizabeth Witheridge writes about an Ojibwaj teenager whom she knows personally. While in reality the young man joins the air force, the character in the story attends the University of Minnesota. Andy Thunder leaves high school and works in a lumber camp in Ely until he realizes that he is the victim of prejudice and consequently receives lower wages because he is an Indian. While majoring in Education at the University, he persuades his fiance, Tamara, to work on a reservation rather than in the inner city as a social worker.

Five books emerged in the 1970's by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, who grew up on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. Whether historical or contemporary, they provide both intimate knowledge of the area and sensitivity to the culture. Jimmy Yellow Hawk (Holiday House, 1971) was the 1971 award winner of the Council on Interracial Books for Children. The hero resents being "Little Jim", but he also knows that following the episode in which he is sprayed by a skunk, he might have been named "Skunk Face" in earlier times. In an inscription in the copy of High Elk's Treasure (Holiday House, 1972) in the Children's Literature Research Collections at the University of Minnesota Libraries, the author wrote, "This is my favorite book—I think it is because I had fun writing it and it all came to mind easily and quickly." In the story, two youngsters bring home an object wrapped in leather which they find in a cave. They are cautioned by their mother to wait for an anthropologist to be present when they open it. The grandmother urges that such sacred objects should be returned to the cave. Betrayed (Holiday House, 1974) describes the broken promises to Indians and the subsequent Sioux Uprising in 1862. Waanatan is told in a vision to barter the white women and children captives for goods. Ironically, the "Fool Soldiers", who are scorned by their fellow Teton tribesmen, are captured and placed in a Mankato prison. When Thunders Spoke (Holiday House, 1974) is inscribed with an explanation: "My husband and I bought a coup stick from the Rosebud Agency Art Shop, which had been made for the movie 'A Man Called Horse'. I researched the act of coup and how a coup stick came to be and as I read of this courageous act the idea came for this book." In Chichi Hoohoo Bogeyman (Holiday House, 1975) two Native American cousins nickname a seemingly eccentric man, convinced that he is possessed by spirits. After an encounter in which he chases them in the woods, they learn of his true identity.

Scandinavians—both immigrants and later generations—currently comprise the next largest group represented in fictional children's books. While most books are limited to one specific group at the time they arrive in the United States, the more sophisticated stories demonstrate ethnic pluralism. Listen, My Heart, by Ellen Turngren (Longmans, Green, 1956) describes farm life among immigrant Swedes similar to the one on which the author lived as a child. Characteristic names like Lars and Sigrid Almbeck, Eric Dahl, and Lisa Strom abound in the book, and there is little interaction with other ethnic groups. Cultural vestiges from the old country, such as considering dancing sinful, are incorporated into the plot. Pastor Iverson preaches in a funeral sermon that the dead woman "caught her sickness at a dance".[4] Language, too, is a point of contention.

> "When you speak to me, speak Swedish," her Mother said when the children answered her in English. "That is my language." ...."Mine, too," Lars said, "But we live in America."[5]

In Borghild Dahl's *Under This Roof* (Dutton, 1961), the Norwegian names include Olaf Romness, Tante Marta and Mrs. Sletvold. Reverend Birkeland comments on the language.

> "...I shall see that he learns to read and speak the Norwegian tongue so that he can read the Bible in its original version. Once he is able to recite long passages of it, pure and unadulterated, he will lose the lax Yankee religion that he has unfortunately learned."[6]

A Norwegian prayer, "I Jesu navn gaar vi til bords" is quoted in its entirety.[7]

The Finns are introduced in Ann Nolan Clark's *All This Wild Land* (Viking, 1976), based on the author's research on her family history in both Finland and Minnesota. Names such as Olavi Mäki, Isä, Pentti, and Maiju support the ethnic validity of this story. Two words associated with the group "sisu", the indomitable spirit of the immigrant group, and "sauna", the special bath, provide motives throughout the story.

Only rarely is a book written by a foreigner acceptable to the indigenous people. An exception and a prototype is Hans Brinker; or the Silver Skates, a Story of Life in Holland (New York: James O'Kane, 1866). Mary Mapes Dodge researched aspects of the country and its culture, but did not visit prior to her writing the book. Hans Brinker was taken to heart by the Dutch children, and a statue was even erected there in his honor. A counterpart is the Swedish author, Stig Ericson, who wrote a trilogy about Dan Henry, and was awarded the highest children's book award in Sweden, the Nils Holgersson Plaque. The author visited the United States to learn about the history of stereotypes of romantic westerns. Dan Henry i Vilda Västern (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers, 1971) was translated into American English by Thomas Teal and published as Dan Henry in the Wild West (Delacorte/Seymour Lawrence, 1976). Accompanied by the "America Chest", the boys Martin and Dan arrive in Northfield, Minnesota in the 1870's only to find that Martin's uncle's barn has just burned down. The most dramatic episode is Dan's observing the Jesse James robbery of the Northfield bank.

Some encounters with immigrants are seen from the point-of-view of people who immigrated some generations previously. In Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House in the Big Woods (Harper, 1932), the girls learn about the Swedish American culture.

> "...she let Laura and Mary look at the pretty things she had brought from Sweden—laces, and colored embroideries, and china. Mrs. Peterson talked Swedish to them, and they talked English to her, and they understood each other perfectly."[8]

Occasionally the ethnic background is inserted merely to add local color. In John Reese's Big Mutt (Westminster, 1952), about a New York City dog abandoned by tourists in South Dakota, two brothers are an integral part of the plot. "The Haberstrohs were from Schleswig-Holstein, where Germany and Denmark come together. Their name was German, their accent Danish."[9]

Two books point out distinct differences between immigrant groups. Lucy Johnston Sypher captures negative aspects of ethnic pluralism in her four books which take place in Wales, North Dakota in 1916 and 1917. In Cousins and Circuses (Atheneum, 1974), the banker father explains that he received help from Mrs. Bortz in converting his University German to the dialect spoken by the local farmers. Townspeople criticized the priest for leaving the church before completing mass in order to assist with a child who had eaten poison.

> "The real trouble, Caroline, is that the Germans don't like Father Bronowski because he's a Pole. But he's a good priest and here they call him wicked because he runs to a dying baby."[10]

In a more jovial tone, ethnic diversity in Birora, on the Minnesota Iron Range, is in evidence in the characters incorporated in Phil Stong's Honk the Moose (Dodd, Mead, 1935). The policeman, Mr. Ryan, the mayor, Mr. Nels Olavsson, Mr. Town Clerk Hulburd, Mr. Councilman Hoaglund, the vegetable man, Mr. Pagnucco, and Mrs. Zacklovich are all introduced. In this delightful picture book for all ages, Waino and Ivar return from hunting to the livery stable to find a moose among the horses and donkeys. "Ivar...was a Suoimi—Swho-me—which is what brave Finlanders call themselves. He remembered

Vainamoinen, the Finnish hero, just as good as Hiawatha and Columbus and Daniel Boone."[11] Reference to language is noted in the father's difficulty in pronouncing "Y" for "J" in "You just seen a moose, what?"[12] Vestiges of an ethnic joke are incorporated into a quotation.

> "When a Finn gets mad he doesn't do a halfway job. First he gets madder than a Chinaman; then he works up through the Italians and the French and on to the English and Germans and then to the Irish—and when he is madder than a mad Norwegian he knows that he is a real Suoimi."[13]

The French, the English, and the Ukrainians are represented in children's books about the midwest to a lesser extent. Unfortunately, With Pipe, Paddle, and Song (Dutton, 1968) is out-of-print, for it provides a picture of the French voyageur and his penetration of the northern rivers and streams in search of the precious beaver pelt. The author differentiates between the men who paddle the Great Lakes and the trappers who negotiate with the American Indians further inland, and their meeting at such famed places as Grand Portage. The hero of the story of French-Indian parentage, Guillaume Puissante, fails in his wooing of an Indian maiden and later finds love in Quebec.

In Carol Ryrie Brink's Caddie Woodlawn (Macmillan, 1935), the father reminisces about his childhood in England, and the circumstances in his coming to the new country. His father had married a village shoemaker's daughter who was a seamstress, and Lord Woodlawn never gave his approval. When Caddie's mother suggests that their own children might have been lords and ladies, her father answers,

> "It was a hard struggle, but what I have in life I have earned with my own hands. I have done well, and I have an honest man's pride. I want no lands and honors which I have not won by my own good sense and industry."[14]

Ukrainians settled in the Upper Midwest of the United States, but their most prominent spokesperson in children's literature is William Kuralek, a Canadian. The father of this painter and storyteller farmed first in Alberta and then settled in Manitoba, not far from the U.S. border. Two of his books, A Prairie Boy's Summer (Houghton Mifflin, 1975) and A Prairie Boy's Winter (Houghton Mifflin, 1973), have short references to his Ukrainian background. In describing the natural phenomenon of bits of rainbow colors near the sun, William's father refers to them in Ukrainian, "The sun has ears," and he calls the whirlwinds in the field "a devil's wedding".[16] The family cat was given a Ukrainian name—Kitla.

Blacks appear in few fiction books with a specific midwest setting. Examples include Borghild Dahl's Good News (Dutton, 1966) and Turn the Next Corner, by Gudrun Alcock (Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1969). The first book has a 1929 setting, and describes two journalism majors in a Norwegian college town who come from different cultures. Marit Ellestad understands the Norwegian mindset in Frogner, and with her black friend, Emily Mitchell, attempts to foster good will through the college newspaper. At one event, "There was taffy with black walnuts which had been sent from the South to one of the members in Emily's church and which she had given to the party as her special contribution. And there were tiny Norwegian cakes, tarts, rosettes, and krumkaker."[17] Not only is there perception of ethnic pluralism, but also of generation gaps in attitudes. Olaf Romness owns the stationery store, which is struggling.

> "He limited his stock to things printed in the Norwegian language, and as the younger generation around here learned to speak English, there were less and less demand for Olaf's wares. Grandfather Torland warned him he would have to make some adjustments eventually, but Olaf sticks to his guns."[18]

Both Good News and Turn the Next Corner are dated, as they refer to blacks as "Negroes". The latter story was published in 1969, with a plot about a youngster whose lawyer father goes to prison for embezzlement. The family then moves from a Chicago suburb to the inner city. There Ritchie makes friends with Slugger, referred to as "colored". The strength of both stories is that there is mutual respect between the friends, descriptive of true integration.

Chinese Americans are usually placed in a west coast setting, but Clara Judson's The Green Ginger Jar; a Chinatown Mystery (Houghton Mifflin, 1949) takes place in Chicago. Of the series of books written by the author, "They came from ________ (Sweden, France, Scotland, Dalmatia, Ireland, Bohemia, and China)", this is the only one now in print. The author, in her foreward, acknowledges use of Evanston Public Library, Deering Library at Northwestern University, Harper Library at the University of Chicago, and the Chicago Historical Society. In her foreward, she states,

> "The United States of America can be likened to a great tapestry woven of many threads—the people of other nations who have come to America with hope for freedom and a better life in their hearts. Counted numerically, China has supplied relatively few of these threads. But because of the character of her people, their industry and cultural background, the Chinese have added strength and beauty to the country of their adoption."[19]

Names such as Ai-mei, Lu Chen, Foo Chan, and Han-lee introduce the reader to Chinese names. The adjustment problem is evident in a dialogue between the fifteen-year-old girl and her grandmother,

> "Don't speak to me!" she snapped. "I hate all our old Chinese ways. I despise all this talk about what a girl may not do. I hate our Chinese manners and silly notions. We should use knives and forks, not chopsticks. We should think and act like other people in Chicago."[20]

The plot of the story is the search for a ginger jar which the girl gives to a stranger, unaware of its importance.

Syrians comprise a small percentage of immigrants, but there are two books in which they play a significant role. In Maud Hart Lovelace's Betsy and Tacy Go Over Beyond the Hill (crowell, 1942), the heroines become acquainted first with a young Syrian girl who is unable to speak English, and then with her family. On the first encounter, Betsy, Tacy and Tib invite Naifi to picnic with them when she tends the goat near Mankato, Minnesota. Later, as the girls collect signatures from the townspeople, they enter "Little Syria". There they observe unfamiliar styles of parlors, kitchens and gardens, and coffee drinking. When they return to their own homes, the girls are told "you have to throw out these names that aren't in English",[21] and that "you might have been killed in that awful place".[23] Eventually the girls select Naifi as the "Queen of Summer" for their skit, and the Syrian girl's father makes a sentimental statement about the meaning of being an American.

Yusef Hanna is introduced in Alice Christgau's The Laugh Peddler (Young Scott, 1968). He brings joy to twelve-year-old Sidney and to the serious folk. For example, he spontaneously organizes a musical evening, encouraging the mother to sing a Swedish spinning song and the father to add an old German rocking horse song.[24]

> "It seemed that 'enjoy' must be one of the Laugh Peddler's favorite words, he used it so much. It was not often spoken by the hard-working farmers of Lakeland Township. Nearly all of them had come as immigrants from North European countries. They were hard working and occupied chiefly with their farms and their church, and they regarded the peddler's job with a certain disapproval."[25]

The peddler's dream is to buy a store in St. Paul where he can settle down with his family, but meanwhile he makes his living in 1914 by walking from farm to farm in the rural area.

Unfortunately, there are a number of ethnic groups who are not currently represented by children's books in print about the Upper Midwest. Books with Jewish-American characters usually take place in large cities. Although Sydney Taylor lives in Chicago, her "All of a Kind Family" series is about her New York City childhood. Emily Neville, Elaine Konigsburg, and others also describe the big city. In The Spell of the Northern Lights (Atheneum, 1974), Lucy Sypher describes a

Jewish girl who takes part in the Christmas Eve program in the Methodist Church. The author wrote in a letter dated March 7, 1978, "Like many such villages, we had only one Jewish family". Most of the books about the Chicano take place either in New York City or the Southwest.

Outstanding fiction comes from the well-spring of the heart and of experience, but unfortunately curriculum needs challenge hack writers to produce books for the commercial market. Librarians, teachers, and parents can scan the books coming off the press in search of those which both reflect ethnic pluralism and meet high literary standards. In time there will undoubtedly be a book about the Baltic and Hungarian immigrants following the World War II and the revolution respectively, and by one of the thousands of Vietnamese newcomers arriving in the Upper Midwest. The grandchildren of immigrants in the U.S.A. who are touched by the muse of writing will undoubtedly seek information about their roots and recreate the situation which the present generation knows so well. Authors Ann Nolan Clark, Carol Ryrie Brink, Borghild Dahl, and Ellen Turngren researched and wrote about the experiences of their parents' or grandparents' childhood— a second and third generation phenomenon. This is the fertile soil from which the fiction describing ethnic pluralism has been and will be drawn.

Footnotes

1. Children's Books in Print, 1977-78 (New York, 1977, p. (v.).
2. Emma Lillian Brock, The Topsy-Turvy Family (New York, 1943), p. (viii).
3. Ibid., p. 38.
4. Ellen Turngren, Listen, My Heart (New York, 1956), p. 30.
5. Ibid., p. 5.
6. Borghild Dahl, Under This Roof (New York, 1961), p. 25.
7. Ibid., p. 179.
8. Laura Ingalls Wilder, Little House in the Big Woods (New York, 1932), p. 128.
9. John Reese, Big Mutt (New York, 1952), p. 119.
10. Lucy Johnston Sypher, Cousins and Circuses (New York, 1974), p. 54.
11. Phil Stong, Honk, the Moose (New York, 1935), p. 13.
12. Ibid., p. 22.
13. Ibid., p. 18-19.
14. Carol Ryrie Brink, Caddie Woodlawn (New York, 1935), p. 14.
15. William Kuralek, A Prairie Boy's Winter (Boston, 1973), n.p.
16. William Kuralek, A Prairie Boy's Summer (Boston, 1975), n.p.
17. Borghild Dahl, Good News (New York, 1966), p. 148.
18. Ibid., p. 41.
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IMAGES OF PLURALISM IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

by

Mr. Dan Cohen

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Dan Cohen

Karen Nelson Hoyle has prepared an excellent survey of ethnic pluralism in fictional children's books set in the Upper Midwest. I am proud to be associated with a firm, Lerner Publications, which in addition to many fictional titles with an ethnic theme, has published an extensive list of non-fiction titles on ethnic group studies. Each of the 31 titles in our IN AMERICA series has been organized around the heritage of a particular cultural group that helps make up the population of the United States today.

After a long period of decline, cultural pluralism regained ideological respectability in the mid-1960s. The resurgence of cultural pluralism paralleled the growth of the civil rights movement. The first and most powerful manifestation of the new status of pluralism was black pride, which developed from the need to heal the wounds imposed by a society which oppressed and denigrated black culture. The idea spread. Other groups became aware that they, too, had cultural values that were being lost or ignored through the dominant influence of the "melting pot" approach to ethnicity. The rediscovery of pluralism has given rise to a revival of ethnic pride and cultural awareness instead of acceptance of homogenization of all ethnic values into a single bland society.

But we have already passed through the golden age of pluralism and now a counter-revolution has been mounted. Ethnic studies are once more under attack. The criticism this time has taken a new form. In the past, critics of ethnic studies were more likely than not to stress the "un-American" character of those who wished to retain some appreciation of cultural differences. To speak with an accent, to have a foreign sounding name, to prefer strange and exotic foods to the ubiquitous hamburger, these were all the mark of the foreigner, the stranger in our midst, either too stubborn or too stupid to adapt himself to the American way of life. To be a pluralist was to be an alien.

Today, the argument goes, to be a pluralist is to be a racist.

Pluralism, the critics charge, is the enemy of egalitarianism. It is a psuedo-intellectual defensive measure used by whites to keep blacks and others perceived as undesirables out of their neighborhoods, out of their schools, and out of their lives. Or as Orlando Patterson put it in the New York Times,

> "Ethnic pluralism, however, dressed up in liberal rhetoric, has no place whatever in a democratic society based on the humanistic ideals of our Judeo-Christian ethic. It is, first, socially divisive. However much the more liberal advocates may proclaim the contrary, the fact remains that the glorification of one's heritage and one's group always implies its superiority, its 'chosenness' over all others." (New York Times, February 20, 1978.)

Mr. Patterson's reasoning succombs to logic on several counts. First, to accept and to honor the differences between cultures is not to proclaim the superiority of one culture over another. It is not necessary to hate kolackys in order to like Mom's apple pie, to renounce polkas in order to enjoy pop, to despise dashikis in order to fancy Levis. Choices like these confront critics of ethnicity with the challenge of telling us just which values are egalitarian enough for their tastes and which should be discarded as pluralist, and, therefore, racist. If the ability to speak a foreign language is too pluralistic to be acceptable, should we drop the requirement from school curriculums? Of course not, for it is only a foreign language that is learned in the home that is suspect. The institutional teaching of language somehow frees it from the taint of ethnicity—but also perhaps, from any knowledge of the cultural content of the language as well.

Of course pluralism can be misused. The systematic exclusion of others from a racial or ethnic enclave cannot be justified by reliance on "ethnic pride." Neither are zoning laws, personnel policies, municipal boundaries, nor a hundred other devices free from manipulation. Though they are not inherently evil, they too may be used to promote evil purposes. But it is one thing to condemn the abuse of pluralism and quite another to cast it out as a morally unacceptable social attitude.

On the contrary, the evidence suggests that pluralism has been a far more significant force in breaking down ethnic barriers than in erecting them. Those with an understanding and appreciation of their own cultural background will tend to feel they have less to fear from someone else of a different background. Self-knowledge tends to erode the edges of bigotry. When a cultural heritage relates a history of forebearers put to the sword generation upon generation because of their beliefs—be they Jew, Catholic, or Protestant—their skin color—be they black, red, or yellow—or some misfortune of geography that left their homeland vulnerable to invasion—particularly East European, African, or American Indian—then it becomes a bit easier to appreciate the other person's problem.

The growth of the interest in cultural diversity has gone far beyond an academic appreciation and has become a popular phenomenon. Jews, blacks, Poles, Italians, and other members of former pariah groups now appear in full unassimilated ethnic regalia as heroes of television and motion pictures. To be sure, the portrayals are more often stereotypical than realistic, but at least they are free from malice and are more sensitive to ethnic concerns than the efforts of an earlier age. At the same time, more ethnics are beginning to appear in board rooms, operating rooms, courtrooms, and even locker rooms, where their presence was less than welcome even a few years before. Pluralists may not be able to take credit for this result, but when an Italian American can become the president of the Ford Motor Company, another Italian American can become president of the Chrysler Corporation, and a Jew can become president of the DuPont Chemical Company, it doesn't require too great a leap of the imagination to recognize that black, red, and female representation are imminent.

Pluralism has more to recommend it than as a preservation of gastronomic diversity or a battering ram in the war against racism. Pluralism is an honest response to the pervasive singularism of American life. It is not only ethnic diversity which has suffered. Mass production, instant communication, and economy of scale have shattered the regional diversity of our nation as well. Cars, food, clothes, homes, even life itself are pretty much the same from coast to coast, north to south. The "Wild West", the "Old South", the "Independent Yankee", all values and traditions that have been acquired layer by layer and generation by generation, are being stripped away because they are too expensive to maintain, too complicated to explain, and too difficult to standardize, not because they are racist. The McDonalds' hamburgers are the same in Biloxi as in Boise, as are the Holiday Inns, and increasingly, the accents of the residents, as well as their dress and social customs. Thus, the struggle for ethnic diversity is subject not only to ideological pressures, but to the economic pressures that have all but destroyed regional diversity in this nation.

By far the most dangerous effect of this new egalitarianism is the anti-egalitarian result of the attack on pluralism. It is not ethnic pluralism but ethnic singularism that has racist overtones. To require someone to assimilate another set of values is to force that person to recognize that their own are inferior. To denounce those values as unworthy of retention is racist. This is the posture of singularism, the legacy of the "melting pot" theory, and it is a long history of racist attitudes. American culture had its beginnings among the English-speaking Scotch-Irish Protestants who first established permanent white settlements here. Generation after generation of Americans have assimilated its concerns and its biases. It took 200 years to elect our first Catholic president. The histories of America which we read as children seldom devoted as much attention to French or Spanish or American Indian settlement in the area which became the United States as they did to the activities of English-speaking peoples. Little attention was given in school to cross-cultural influences of the Italian Renaissance on American development as opposed to the English contribution of Anglo-Saxon concepts of law. More time was spent on Henry VIII and Mary, Queen of Scots, than say, King Stanislaus or the Papacy.

The message of American singularism was a message of cultural inferiority to all those who failed to share the cultural background of the dominant group. For these reasons, pluralism has deserved the resurgence it has enjoyed in American life. Those who attack pluralism as "racist" today are as short-sighted in their criticism as those who attacked it as "un-American" yesterday. Neither criticism has succeeded in destroying the acceptance of pluralism, for Americans have come to realize that no single American culture can reflect the wide spectrum of our traditions and values. We are all ethnics. The good work of Karen Nelson Hoyle is one such contribution to this continuing effort to achieve a just and happy society.

THE NEW ETHNICITY: TOWARDS A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY

by

Mr. Stephen R. Aiello

Mr. Aiello is President of the New York City Board of Education.

Stephen R. Aiello

The great seal of the United States: E. Pluribus Unum, means "from many one." Yet, what does this really mean? How does a nation of no one culture, no one language, no one race, no one history, no one ethnic stock, expect to exist as a unified nation. In short, what does it mean to be an American?

For many years, people thought that the melting pot concept was the way immigrants and racial minorities could become and would be accepted as Americans. However, in order to become an American according to the melting pot concept, one was almost forced to lose one's own cultural identity, heritage and history and become an homogenized assimilated white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

In 1909, Israel Zangwell stated the melting pot vision of America:

> "America is God's Crucible, the great Melting Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming! Here you stand, good folk, think I, when I see them at Ellis Island, here you stand in your fifty groups with your fifty languages and histories, and your fifty hatreds and rivalries, but you won't be long like that, brothers, for these are the fires of God. A fig for your feuds and vendettas! Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians - into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American ... The real American has not yet arrived. He is only in the Crucible, I tell you - he will be the fusion of all races, the coming superman."

However, ethnic communities and cultures are deeply embedded in the social structure of America. The metaphor of the melting pot does not accurately reflect the true status of ethnicity and ethnic cultures in America. As Glazer and Moynihan stated in Beyond the Melting Pot, "ethnicity is fixed deep in American life generally". Ethnicity strongly influences American politics. Ethnicity continues to define a person's close social relationships - family, friends, neighbors and marriage.

At present, the United States is experiencing a period of history marked by a resurgence of ethnicity as a major component of its political, social and economic development. Until recently, this resurgence was consciously ignored by both historians and sociologists. In the last few years, however, the impact of ethnicity on every day life has been so great that academicians, policy makers and agency personnel have been forced to recognize it, especially in terms of jobs, language and neighborhood stability.

As Professor Michael Novak had stated in his book, The Rise of The Unmeltable Ethnics, "The new ethnicity is not the result of consciousness to an uncritical stage, but the acquisition of a new confidence in consciousness, a multi-cultural consciousness".

The new ethnicity favors the development of a pluralistic personality. This pluralistic personality does not pretend to be universal, but neither does it accept being stereotyped or limited to the resources of one cultural history only. Rather, the pluralistic personality recognizes its roots, draws consciously from its own resources and tries to become skilled both in self knowledge and the accurate perception of those with different roots.

Ethnicity and cultural pluralism is and will remain an integral part of our society because they serve real human needs and group purposes. As Andrew Greeley states in

Why Can't They Be Like Us:

> "The functions of ethnic groups in American society are multiple. They keep cultural traditions alive, provide us with preferred associates, help organize the social structure, offer opportunities for mobility and success, and enable men to identify themselves in the face of the threatening chaos of a large and impersonal society."

And, to quote Greeley again

> "Whether we like them or not really doesn't matter very much; they are concrete realities with which we must cope, and condemning or praising them is a waste of time."

Because ethnicity and cultural pluralism are here to stay, students in our schools must master the ideas, concepts and information needed to understand themselves and others as ethnics living in a pluralistic society. New York City, the most pluralistic of all communities, has the greatest opportunity for success or failure in attaining this mastery. As educators who embrace the concepts of cultural pluralism and equality of opportunity for all, we must strive to transmit to all pupils the new vitality that democracy is gaining as a result of racial and ethnic consciousness raising in the past decade.

In New York City Public Schools, various programs and approaches have been implemented to strengthen a true cultural synthesis of ethnic groups living side by side in the "salad bowl," not the "melting pot" of the city.

The New York City Public School system in recent years has been moving away from the traditional concept of a single, monolithic school program towards diversity based on respect for different cultural patterns and learning styles. I want to describe, briefly, some approaches and policies in New York City such as: the use of techniques and materials appropriate not only for Anglo-European children but also specific language and ethnic groups; information about the contributions of non-Anglo Americans to the American heritage in curricula and textbooks; and staff development; active involvement and greater influence of parents of minority children on school policies and affairs; and racial integration of students.

Providing educational techniques and materials to meet the needs of language and ethnic group children is one of the major purposes of bilingual education in New York City.

Bilingual education is the use of two languages, one of which is English, the other, the native language of the child, as mediums of instruction for the same pupil population in a well-organized program which encompasses part of all of the curriculum and includes the study of the history and culture associated with the mother tongue. A complete program develops and maintains the children's self-esteem and a legitimate pride in both cultures.

The Board of Education's commitment to expanding the effort in bilingual programs has been demonstrated by the establishment of an Office of Bilingual Education at central headquarters, by the allocation of tax levy money specifically earmarked for the establishment of bilingual programs, and the creation of a Bilingual Policy.

An interesting point is that these bilingual programs are being implemented not only in Spanish but also in French, Italian, Chinese, and Greek. The State Department of Education has also demonstrated its interest in furthering and supporting the concept of bilingual education. During the past two years the State Department has notified all school districts that bilingual education will be one of the three top priority areas for consideration for funding. It is clear that through the joint efforts of the city, the state, and the federal government, considerable support is being marshaled in an effort to provide bilingual programs for the thousands of students in New York City for whom English is not a native language.

The advent of bilingual education may stimulate the awareness that our nation possesses a wealth of linguistic and cultural resources which must be developed. The attention now paid to this potential talent may alter the way in which we provide instruction for all children from earliest grades all the way through the university level. There is a pressing need to establish bilingual-bicultural programs designed to develop and strengthen linguistic skills and cultural identity.

The curriculum, especially in language arts and social studies, provides information about the contributions of non-Anglo-Americans and helps students to clarify their own sense of ethnic and personal identity, be comfortable with it and respond positively to individuals who belong to other ethnic groups.

In a recent survey of ethnic studies curricula in New York City, Black Studies was cited most often by schools and Puerto Rican Studies came second. It is not surprising that the order of the choices in ethnic studies is similar to the respective population percentages.

Other data in the survey revealed that a wide range of other minority groups were studied in the schools. Some of these groups include African, American-Indian, Asian, Caribbean, Central and South American, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Jewish, Mexican-American, Oriental and Ukrainian.

A growing need of minority group people to identify more closely with their respective ethnic heritages stimulated demands from white ethnics, such as Italian-Americans for more scholarly representation in the curriculum and adequate money to pay for the development of such materials. In response to the various minority group demands, a federal government Title IX Ethnic Heritage Act provided grants for local school districts, community organizations and/or universities, for ethnic studies curriculum development, teacher training projects and dissemination of information and materials. The New York City school district received one such grant to develop curriculum materials and to document cultural activities in the area of non-English speaking Caribbean, French and Spanish people during the 1976-1977 school year.

By the mid 1970's several bulletins in minority history and culture had been developed and distributed to both elementary and secondary schools in New York City. These supplementary bulletins, however, were distributed but not mandated for implementation.

In social studies numerous curriculum bulletins dealing with specific ethnic groups were prepared for teachers in elementary and secondary schools. These bulletins are aimed at helping students develop self-concepts by learning about their respective heritages and cultures. In addition, students are encouraged to study about other ethnic groups to develop an awareness and an appreciation of history, traditions, and cultural achievements of different groups. Furthermore, curriculum bulletins in foreign languages contain cultural segments which draw attention to various ethnic groups in New York City. The focus is on helping students examine customs, traditions, values, heroes, history and cultural achievements of the nation in which each language is spoken so that the sense of identity with each ethnic group is strengthened.

In addition to courses of study about specific ethnic groups, the Board of Education officially proclaims numerous ethnic heritage and foreign language weeks: Black History, Italian Culture, Irish Heritage, Jewish Heritage, German Language, French Language, among others. Schools are encouraged to involve students in meaningful learning experiences related to many ethnic groups in New York City. A teacher's guide accompanies the announcements. Students celebrate these weeks in a warm, positive atmosphere as part of the year-round preparation of children to live in a multi-ethnic city and nation.

It is extremely difficult for a child of an ethnic minority to accept his own ethnicity and respond positively to the dominant culture if his own cultural heritage is demeaned or ignored in textbooks and instructional materials, as has so often been the case in the past.

Racial integration is also an essential element in any school program dedicated to the idea of cultural pluralism. The Board of Education and the Chancellor are committed to providing the best possible education for every child in the New York City schools, regardless of race, color or creed. The Chancellor and the City Board of Education have demonstrated their commitment to quality integrated education, and to the administration of an educational system which fosters an educational climate where integrated education can be sustained. They are unequivocally committed to the constitutional principle that admission to the public schools must be on a non-discriminatory basis. No New York City public schools has a racially discriminatory admissions policy—there is no debate on this point. This is clearly a matter of law, conscience, and record.

The Board of Education has adopted a variety of programs with the specific and consistent objective of achieving an improved racial balance of pupils in the city schools. These policies have been pursued vigorously despite resistance at times from some segments of the population. As a result, for years more students have been attending integrated schools in New York City than in any other comparable urban school system and significantly more than is true in non-urban school systems.

The major obstacle to achieving even more effective integration has been a steady shift in population within the metropolitan area that has resulted in a pupil population in which so-called minority groups are now heavily in the majority. If all of the city's 1,129,000 public school pupils could attend a single complex of schools, such as an Education Park, an ethnic inbalance would still result given the fact that over 65 percent of the entire pupil population consists of minority group pupils. This percentage continues to grow steadily.

An analysis of the United States Census figures in The New York Times (1976) indicated that New York City's white population declined by more than 600,000 between 1970 and 1975. The loss of more than 600,000 whites between 1970 and 1975 was nearly as large as the decline in white population in the previous 10 years, indicating a sharply increased rate of "white flight" during the most recent period.

The effect of "white flight" is felt in cities across the nation as noted by School Chancellor Irving Anker (1976):

> "The city schools are becoming increasingly segregated because the cities are becoming increasingly segregated... For example, in New York City, more than 160 schools that were integrated, with an ethnic balance of 50 to 75 percent white, have become sub-

> stantially resegregated... Baltimore's schools in 1975 had a white population of only 27 percent with 73 percent minority.... Chicago's schools in 1975 had a white population of only 23 percent with 77 percent minority.... Philadelphia follows a similar pattern with the white public school population decreasing from 61 percent in 1955 to 33 percent in 1975.... Similar patterns in relation to decreases in the white population occur in Washington, D.C.; Houston and Dallas, Texas; New York City; Los Angeles; and Detroit."

The school, as the formal educational institution of the society, has an important role to play in reducing the tensions and the injustices, including the misgivings about self, that result from unexamined ethnic beliefs and attitudes. To fulfill that role, more is needed than a course or two on ethnic groups. The entire school must be infused with concern and action— to build awareness of ethnicity as one source of the diversity within our national society. I submit that ethnic self-awareness and understanding help students to develop humanistic attitudes and the skills to engage in reflective social action. These enable young people to participate more effectively in the elimination of social conflict and polarization. For this reason, there is a need for strong commitment to the goals of cultural pluralism. The community and schools must work together to achieve these common goals. If the educational system fails to respond to the needs of cultural minorities, it will continue to promote the development of a rigidly stratified and racially, ethnically segregated society.

The aim, therefore of the new ethnicity and its philosophical foundation is unitive not divisive, creative not destructive, multi-cultural not chauvinistic.

The Minnesota Project on
Ethnic America

and the

Jewish Community Relations Council,
Anti-Defamation League
of Minnesota
and the Dakotas

in cooperation with the

Upper Midwest Ethnic Studies Association
the International Institute
and the
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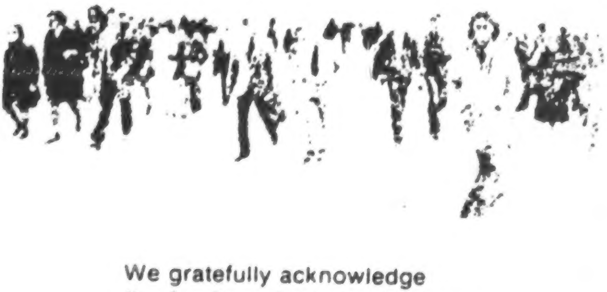

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